

STORY WALTER FRANCYK | PHOTOGRAPHY SANDY MACKAY

# TAKING TIME ON THE WATER



When the ice on Haliburton Lake melts this spring, few people will be happier than Peter Vandendool. A competitive water skier for 30 years, he intends to find out if the lake is a good spot for water skiing. “We’re really looking forward to that,” he says. Peter and his wife, Donna bought a cottage on the lake last fall.

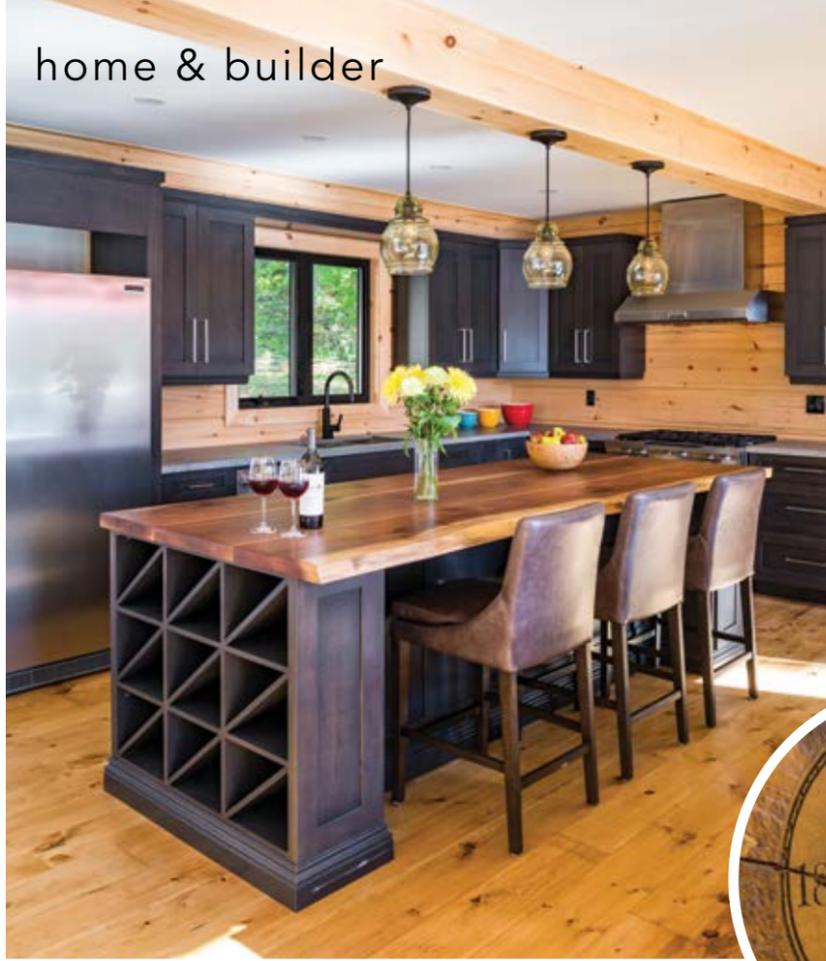
A realtor with RE/MAX Escarpment Realty Inc. in the Hamilton and Burlington area, Peter and Donna had rented a Haliburton cottage as a place to spend a week with their family for eight summers. As grandchildren arrived, they outgrew that summer spot and began hunting for a cottage of their own.

“Our family loves to spend time on water,” says Vandendool. Although his competitive skiing days are behind him, at 62 he still skis multiple times each week. Daughter Traci-Ann is a wakeboarder and son Jake occasionally slalom skis. “I would love to get the grandkids involved in water sports too,” says Vandendool. His oldest

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**ABOVE:** Muskoka chairs line the dock on Haliburton Lake where Peter and Donna Vandendool look forward to summer at their new cottage. **TOP RIGHT:** Stone pillars and wooden timbers shelter the upland entrance. **RIGHT:** The fire pit in the front yard is a great place for the family's evening gatherings.



The 1867 Confederation Log & Timber Frame stamp of authenticity.



grandson is three and Vandendool sees the next 10 years as prime time with the next generation. "This is the time we want to be close to the grandkids. That's why cottage life appealed to us."

Manufactured by **1867 Confederation Log & Timber Frame** and built by **Cedar Wylde Homes Inc.**, the four-bedroom, 3,000 sq. ft. log house was designed and furnished by Ian Robertson and his wife Elaine. The president of Ian Robertson Design, Robertson has been designing custom homes, planning and managing construction for 15 years. While Tudor Revival, French Chateau and Georgian architecture inspire many of his projects, this was his first log home. "I had been in contact with Confederation for a long time, for a number of years prior to building it," Robertson says. "I liked the way they looked, I like the feeling of all the wood that surrounds you. I thought it was fitting for a cottage so I went that route." He

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A wine rack is built into one end of the kitchen island. Main level floors are made of 10-inch pine planks. **OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT:** Pendant lamps illuminate the open-concept kitchen. **TOP RIGHT:** Large sidelight windows and coach lamps flank the main entry. **BOTTOM:** The lake is seldom out of sight in this cottage where there is lots of room to mingle and move.



White pine trim frames the peak head and gable windows.



The cottage's designers chose clean-lined, rectangular furniture to give the home a contemporary style. Black tables in the great room complement the black window frames. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** A floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace separates the great room from the sun room. **BOTTOM:** Custom-built cabinetry provides ample storage space in the ground floor laundry room.

and Elaine worked on preliminary designs, refined the floor plans and drafted elevations around a particular look. "We liked the open gable look," Robertson says. "Those were the predominant features of the house – vaulted ceilings and bigger volumes of space." Once they ensured the design fit their budget, they passed it on to Confederation to do the architectural drawings.

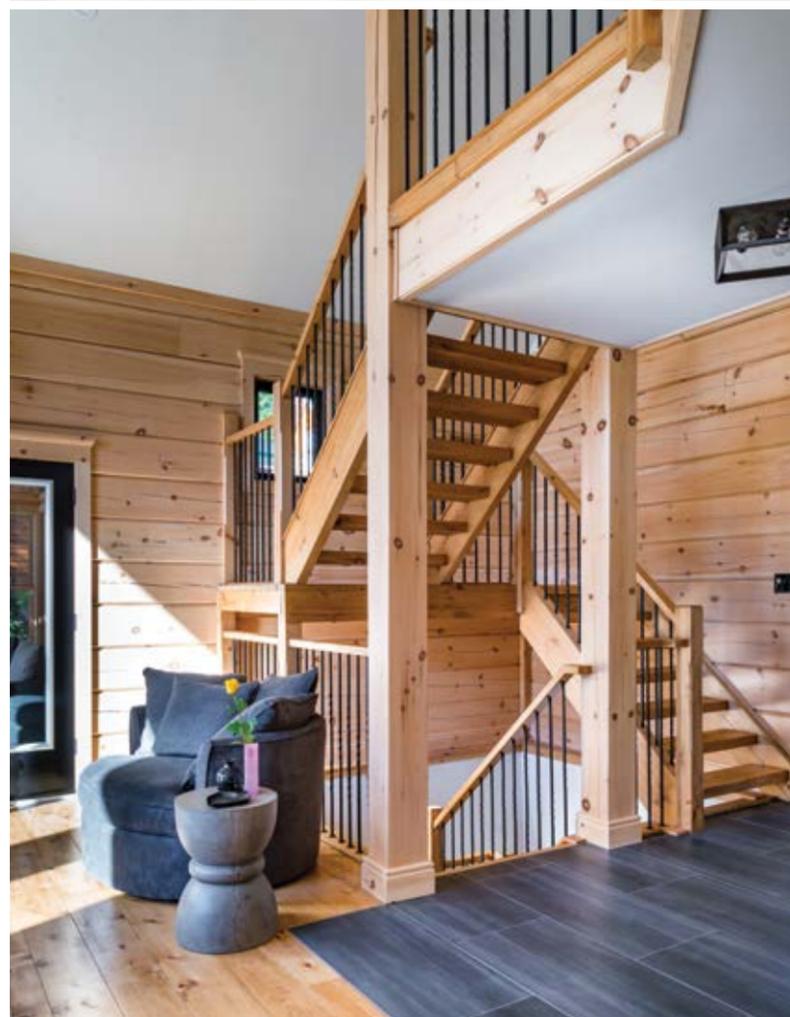
Confederation owner **Rick Kinsman** describes the Robertson design as a collaboration that uses every inch of space. "He was very receptive to listening to our ideas, then he put his own touches on it," Kinsman says. "It's not very often you get a homeowner who can visualize so well. He understood what we wanted to do. That was interesting."

**Steve Johnson's** company Cedar Wylde built the home from ground up, looking after all the sub-trades, excavation and landscaping. "It's a beautiful design," says Johnson, who specializes in log homes. "They're unique. There's thousands of builders out there that build stick frame custom homes but log homes are a smaller, niche market and I just think it's neat." He has been building Confederation's log homes for 32 years. *Continued on page 42*



Dovetail corners secure the six-by-12-inch pine log walls.





**TOP:** A view of the main floor from the loft. **LEFT:** A wooden staircase with black metal balusters ascends to the second floor and leads downstairs to the ground level. **ABOVE:** One of two doors flanking the fireplace opens to the sunroom on the west side of the cottage.



Woven furniture, a pine ceiling and wood-framed windows that open top and bottom lend an outdoor ambience to the all-season Haliburton room.



**TOP LEFT:** White walls and wood with black trim repeat the contemporary style in the en suite. **TOP RIGHT:** The master bedroom allows occupants to awake to a view of the lake. **ABOVE:** Wood and metal bunks furnish this second-floor bedroom, which connects to an adjoining bathroom.

The Robertsons knew from day one how they wanted the cottage to look – with an open kitchen, family room and lots of space in which to move around. High volume ceilings give it a feeling of grandeur and capture the southwestern view of the lake. “My wife and I did all the interior décor ourselves,” Robertson says. “We wanted this cottage to feel contemporary, even though it was a log cottage, so when we chose our furniture, it was clean-lined, rectangular, square and low. We had the black theme throughout, so black windows, black railings and black accents helped that contemporary feel.”

A wood-paneled four-season Haliburton room proved to be the favourite of everyone who visited. “We ensured all the windows open up, both top and bottom, to give you the feeling you’re still in a screened room. It captures the outdoors, but you have all the protection from the elements when you close the widows,” Robertson says.

The Robertson family enjoyed summer at the cottage, then tested the market by putting the property up for sale, a serendipitous choice that brought the Vandendools to their door in the company of realtor **Jessica Wilson** from **Team Haliburton Highlands at RE/MAX North Country Realty Inc.** Vandendool had hired Wilson to find a cottage that didn’t need repairs, renovations or improvements.

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**RIGHT:** This large ground-floor bedroom has a walk-out to the gently-sloping front yard. **BELOW:** The family room on the ground floor provides extra space for indoor entertainment and relaxation. **BOTTOM:** Twin-over-full bunk beds with a nautical motif have plenty of room for young cottagers.



“We love the design of it; the look of it,” says Vandendool, who admits he never thought he would buy a log home. “We like contemporary, but this is like a contemporary house with a cottage feel. To us it was just a perfect mix. We love the way the Robertsons furnished it.”

They bought the home with all the furniture. “It was exactly our taste because we have the same style at home. It’s very contemporary.”

The Vandendool family enjoys the cottage kitchen and dining area as well as the easy access to the outside deck. “We spend a lot of time outside and everything just flows perfectly,” says Vandendool. “It’s got a great view of the lake. The kids love it. They’re excited. We gave them all keys when we took possession. We told them the more it gets used the better.”

Robertson says he and Elaine had a good time planning, building and furnishing the lake house. “My wife and I spent an entire winter shopping, which is fun for somebody who likes to shop,” Robertson says. “We enjoyed that part of it. I enjoyed the design process, the construction.”

If the Roberstons can find another parcel of reasonably priced land, they’d probably build another cottage, Robertson says. **OH**



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