

STYLISH LIVING IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

HOME

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+ GARDEN

SUMMER 2015

ESCAPE TO THE LAKE

A classic family retreat on Lake James

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ESCAPE TO THE LAKE

**A classic family retreat is
designed for generations to come**

By Kate O'Connor
Photography by Nancy Nolan

There are some phrases that are immediately evocative of high summer. Among these, “The Country House,” “The Lake House,” and “The Mountain House” rank at the top. Cool breezes... shimmering waters...the dappled shade of old trees...easy, no-fuss living. For Susie and Jeff Noble, their getaway home at Lake James is the best of all of these. It’s a cozy, very personal home...a classic family retreat that — surprisingly — began with a pre-designed architectural plan.



With an inspiring lake view from the windows and a deep, double ceramic farmhouse sink by Shaws, cleanup seems less of a chore in the Noble kitchen. The granite countertop is by Mountain Marble & Granite.

“We had bought the property back in 2008,” says Susie. “At first, I thought I wanted a large house, but we had a budget and my husband pointed out that we could either spend it on building or on interior design.” As they were scouting architects, looking at plans and formulating ideas, Susie became aware of architect Al Platt’s design for the HGTV 2006 Dream House at Lake Lure. “I absolutely loved it!” she exclaims. Although a similar structure wasn’t in their range, the Nobles were pleased to discover that Platt had several existing plans that would suit their site. “They were ready to build — and reasonably priced. Everything was specified: plumbing, electricity, finishes...everything.”

“The plan that they chose is called “Doghobble,” named after an under-appreciated native Appalachian evergreen,” explains Platt. “The Nobles had seen a built prototype of the house and felt that it would work on their property, which is narrow and deep. It’s a linear, two-level plan that’s designed for sloping mountain sites and packs a lot of living space into a fairly small footprint. It also has a strong presence of outdoor space — a substantial covered porch connected to open decking for an unimpeded view of the lake.”

Working with Platt, builders Gary Boarman and Keith



The use of rustic texture, varied woods finishes and traditional furniture styling mixes comfortably with a low key, woodland palette — all contributing to the sensibility of a treasured “generational” lake house.



Throughout the home, personal touches abound — art glass, vintage transferware plates, and antique prints, elements of corrugated metal.



Stacked Tennessee fieldstone by Carolina Breeze Masonry graces the fireplace surround that anchors the living room area.

Greene of Lake James Custom Homes, set the house high on the ridgeline, with elaborate drainage systems to handle water run-off. Josh Hawkins of Slope Solutions created a series of meandering stairways — punctuated by charming “rest-stops” like the fire pit — leading down to the boathouse at lakefront.

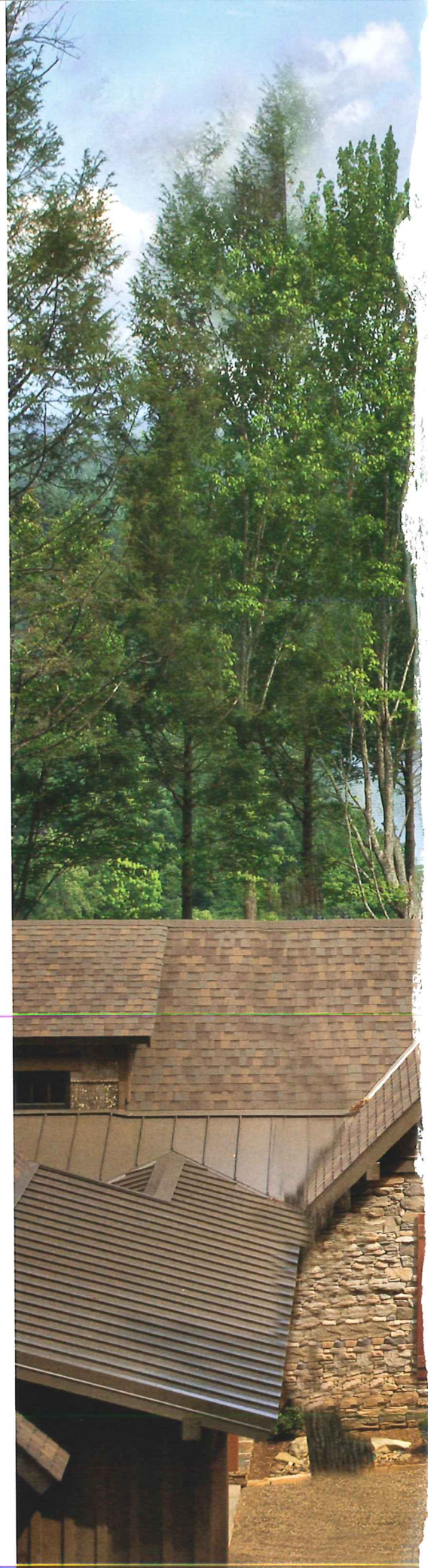
Platt’s design provided the Nobles a modest 2300-square-foot residence with a main floor that is compact and ergonomic for the couple when they are on their own and a lower floor

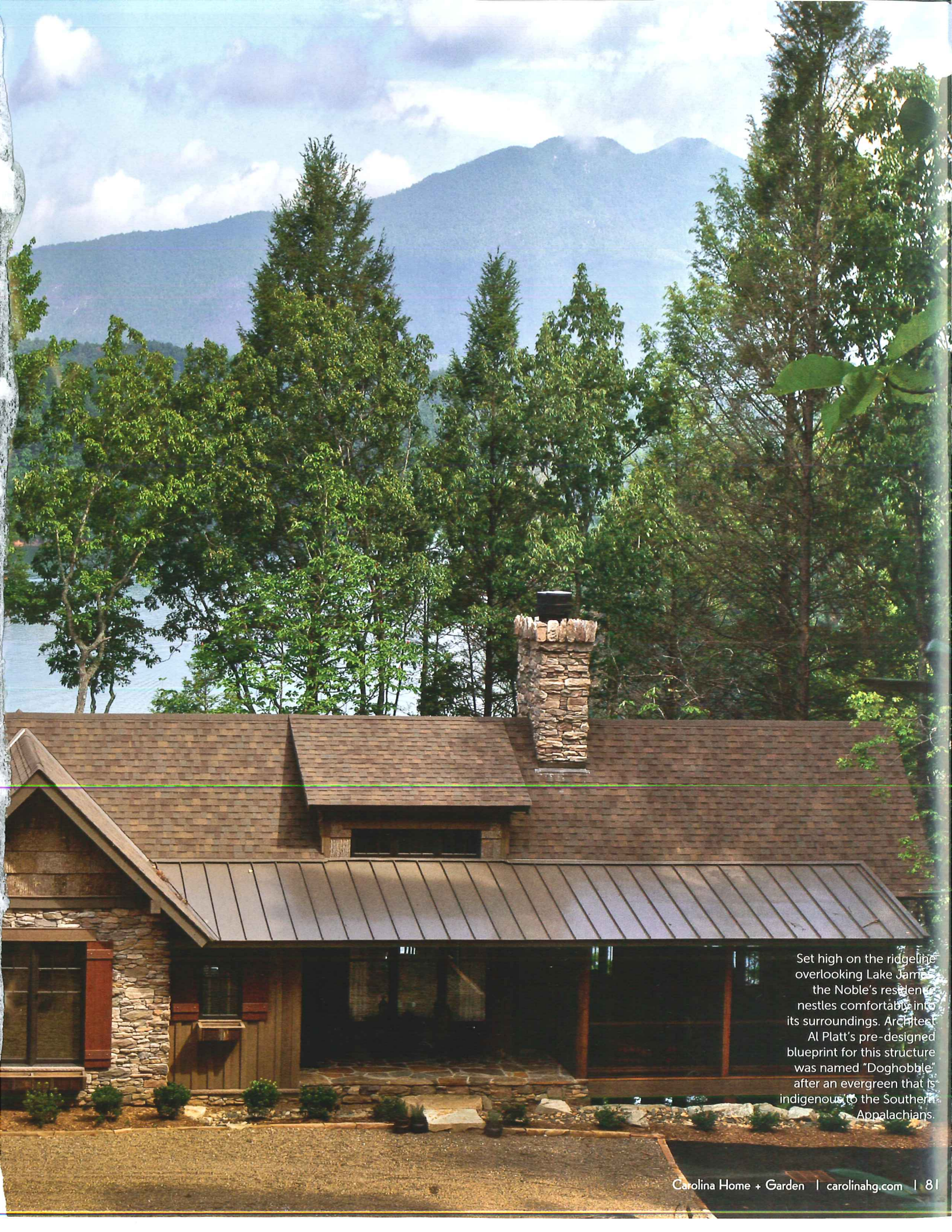
that accommodates entertaining with ease. The house nestles beautifully into its setting. Abundant windows — including clerestory panes set in shed dormers — offer ambient light and the use of vernacular materials such as poplar bark siding, Tennessee fieldstone and standing seam metal roofing feel familiar and appropriate. “When you see this home, you don’t immediately think, ‘Who was the architect?’ Our fingerprints are nowhere to be found,” says Platt. “It’s just a pure, indigenous environment.”



In the lower level family room, a set of high-back spindle chairs with woven rush seats surround the gaming table. On the wall, a set of raised relief maps of the surrounding area helps the family to plan their hiking excursions.

Random width white pine planks were set horizontally against a black felt backing and given a light "milk wash" finish to evoke a rustic sensibility. Native American water skins, filled with hydrangeas, add a touch of natural grace.





Set high on the ridgetop overlooking Lake James, the Noble's residence nestles comfortably into its surroundings. Architect Al Platt's pre-designed blueprint for this structure was named "Doghobble," after an evergreen that is indigenous to the Southern Appalachians.



A scissor-truss ceiling, accented with hand-hewn beams, creates a dramatic yet rustic atmosphere in the master bedroom. The plank walls have been given a wash of mossy green paint and are hand rubbed. Peacock Alley fabrics dress the reproduction spindle bed.

It's also an ideal context for the homeowner's individual style and tastes. "For the interiors, all of the warmth and regional connectivity and context have to be supplied by the decorating layer," notes Platt. The Nobles chose designer Kathryn Greeley — a frequent collaborator with Platt — to guide them in putting their personal imprint on the structure.

Susie has a fondness for barns, and for rustic country styling. That ambiance was immediately established with the deft use of varied wood materials: red and white quarter-sawn oak floorboards reclaimed from a Virginia barn; random width, milk-washed white pine planking applied horizontally on the walls (backed by black felt to accentuate the pattern); and hand-hewn ceiling beams and mantel accents.

The custom, black glazed wormy alder kitchen cabinetry by Benbow & Associates extends to ceiling height, punctuated with glass-encased chicken wire cabinets that display local pottery and echo the screen door of the nearby pantry area. Tumbled marble dresses the backsplash, and the beadboard-sided island features a hand-made, walnut top from Benbow.

Greeley established the color palette based on a charming,



Finish carpenter Shane Meadows created the primitive linen chest from the same repurposed wood used on the home's floors and topped it with hammered copper. The bowls are by Kitras Art Glass; fish glasses by John Cook Studios — all from New Morning Gallery.



Antique transferware plates with a fish motif form an alluring grouping on the wall of the master bedroom. Designer Katherine Greeley combs local antique stores for the unusual, personalized items that typify her philosophy of interiors that feel “collected, not decorated.”

English chestnut motif chintz, awash in rich gold, greens and reds, used for the living room draperies and enveloping a pair of antique spiral leg chairs. A soft, mossy green hue visually connects the classic roll-arm sofa, the distressed legs of the dining table and the granite kitchen countertops by Mountain Marble & Granite, moving the eye through the great room.

That subdued green is reprised in the master suite as a color wash on the vertical plank walls that rise to a scissor truss of hand-hewn beams. Cheerful crewel-fabric drapes and Peacock Alley bedding with a diamond-pattern matelassé coverlet provide additional layers of texture.

Throughout the home, personal touches abound — art

glass, vintage transferware plates, and antique prints, elements of corrugated metal. Area rugs add comfort under foot and subtly echo the color scheme. “My philosophy is to create a look that is collected, rather than designed,” notes Greeley. “We wanted to evoke the feeling of a generational cottage.”

She has succeeded in this charming retreat. “My husband grew up with cousins who had a place in Canada at Lake Muskoka,” Susie notes. “He visited there every summer and he felt that it bonded everyone as a family. We would like to think that this house will be passed down from generation to generation...that many wonderful memories will be created here.”



Architect Al Platt's design for the Noble house includes abundant outdoor living space. Rustic materials add a regional flavor to the home's screened porch. The exterior walls are faced with poplar bark shingles and the fireplace surround of stacked Tennessee fieldstone has a hand-hewn mantel. The ceiling planks are painted a custom shade of "old barn red."