

The Seattle Times  
SEPTEMBER 27, 2015

# PACIFIC NW

## ONE AND DONE

Perceptions don't have  
much to do with reality  
when it comes  
to only children

**FIT FOR LIFE**  
Sailing

**NW LIVING**  
Log cabin  
sanctuary

**NATURAL  
GARDENER**  
Making choices

**TASTE**  
Poached pears

**THE GRAPEVINE**  
World-class grower



ie cabin's steps were redone, concrete stairs with half-log risers set between stout river-rock posts. Railings are heavy chain. This was once the home's main entrance.



# Log Cabin Sanctuary

Modern in all the right places, but rustic forever



On the exterior, J.A.S. Design Build reinked the logs, installed new windows and gave the cabin a proper seismic retrofit. "It's everything I wanted," says owner Patti McCall. "People come and say, 'How do you ever leave the house?' I don't. I don't want to. My house is my sanctuary."



Bedrooms were cleared of false ceilings, fir revealed and painted sky blue, and closets and bookshelves were tucked in wherever possible. This is the guest room, with west-facing windows to the water. The fir floor also is newly revealed.

THE JOURNEY up the driveway is quite revealing, in a not-revealing-at-all sort of way. It's winding and steep and wooded and flowered. A rural dirt road of a pathway on a street of otherwise unsuspecting city homes in West Seattle.

And then there it is. The old log cabin. Weathered and worn in the best ways. Fat and solid. A fortress made of log and river rock. The screen door pops open and out come Clyde and Duffy, a pair of nosy Cairn terriers, and right behind, Patti McCall.

"If you open yourself up, it's amazing what comes to you when you don't know you're looking for it." That's Patti talking about her varied careers; antiques and secondhand furniture store owner; oncology hospice nurse; and until three years ago, co-owner of Queen Anne Book Co. (She's also a masterful gardener, but has not, so far, received a paycheck for those efforts.)

Her line of thinking also applies to her very special home, 2,200 square feet with three bedrooms and two baths. "Don bought it, and I moved in three months later: 1982," Patti says. "This was Don and mine's house."

Four years ago, though, Patti's husband, Dr. Don Nakonechny, died of cancer. And Patti was home alone.

"I did exactly what people say don't do," she says. "Don died in May, and I started planning the remodel in the fall.

"But it was the one good thing I did. I made a sanctuary for me."

And is it ever. The once-brooding kitchen is now bright and country-modern. At its center is a real monster of a butcher block ▶



k fireplace is old, but now has a new mantel made from a madrona log found on the property.





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#### ◀NW LIVING

(it took eight men to haul it in), now with a blackened steel counter. It is Patti's work space and dining island. Bathrooms got the same treatment (sky blue wainscoting, marble accents). Bedrooms were cleared of false ceilings, fir revealed and painted (also sky blue) and closets were tucked in wherever possible. The cabin's front steps were redone, concrete stairs with half-log risers set between chubby river-rock posts. Railings are heavy chain (mirroring those holding up the living-room mantel).

And, needless to say, there are new bookshelves everywhere; in rooms, along hallways. ▶

The kitchen was added in the 1970s and reflected that era. The focal point of the new room, bright and country-modern, is a beefy butcher block with a blackened steel counter. Cabinets (in addition to the remodel) are by J.A.S. Counters are soapstone. The windows (Lindal) match those previously in place.

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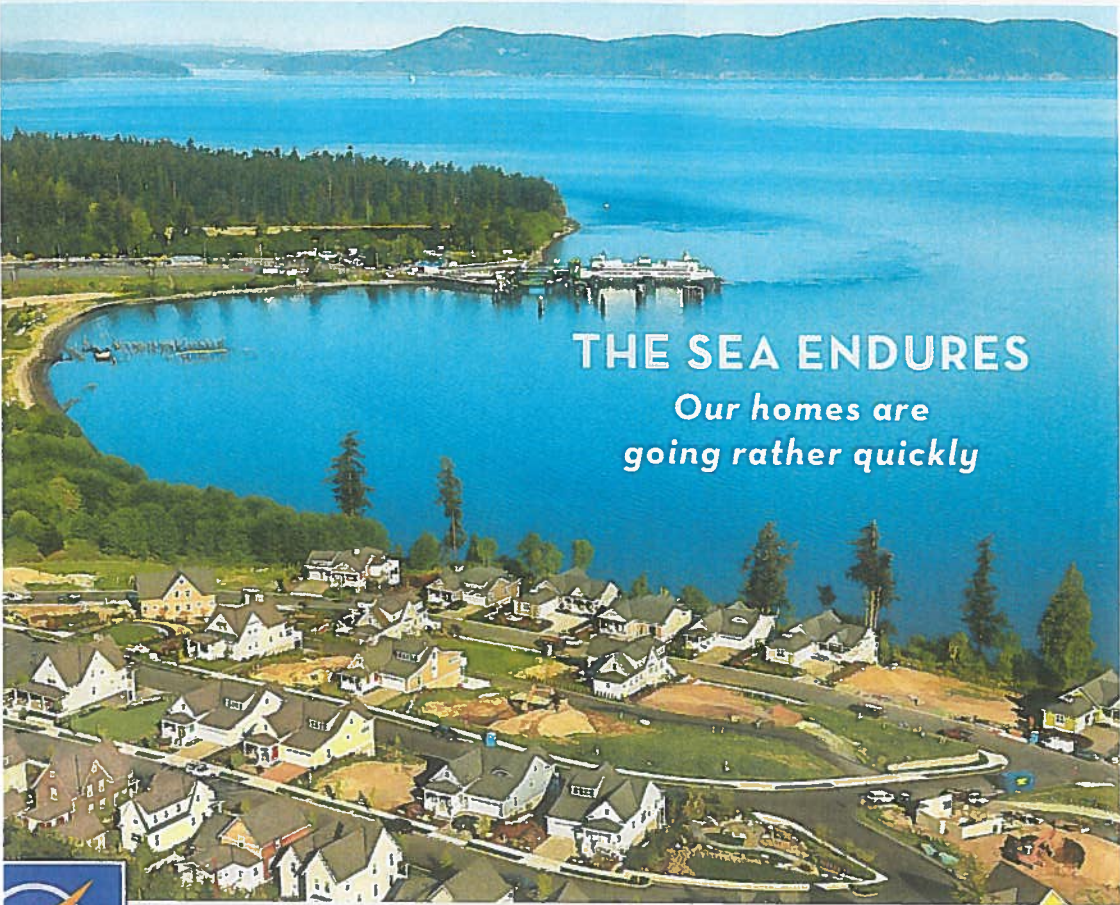


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## THE SEA ENDURES

*Our homes are  
going rather quickly*



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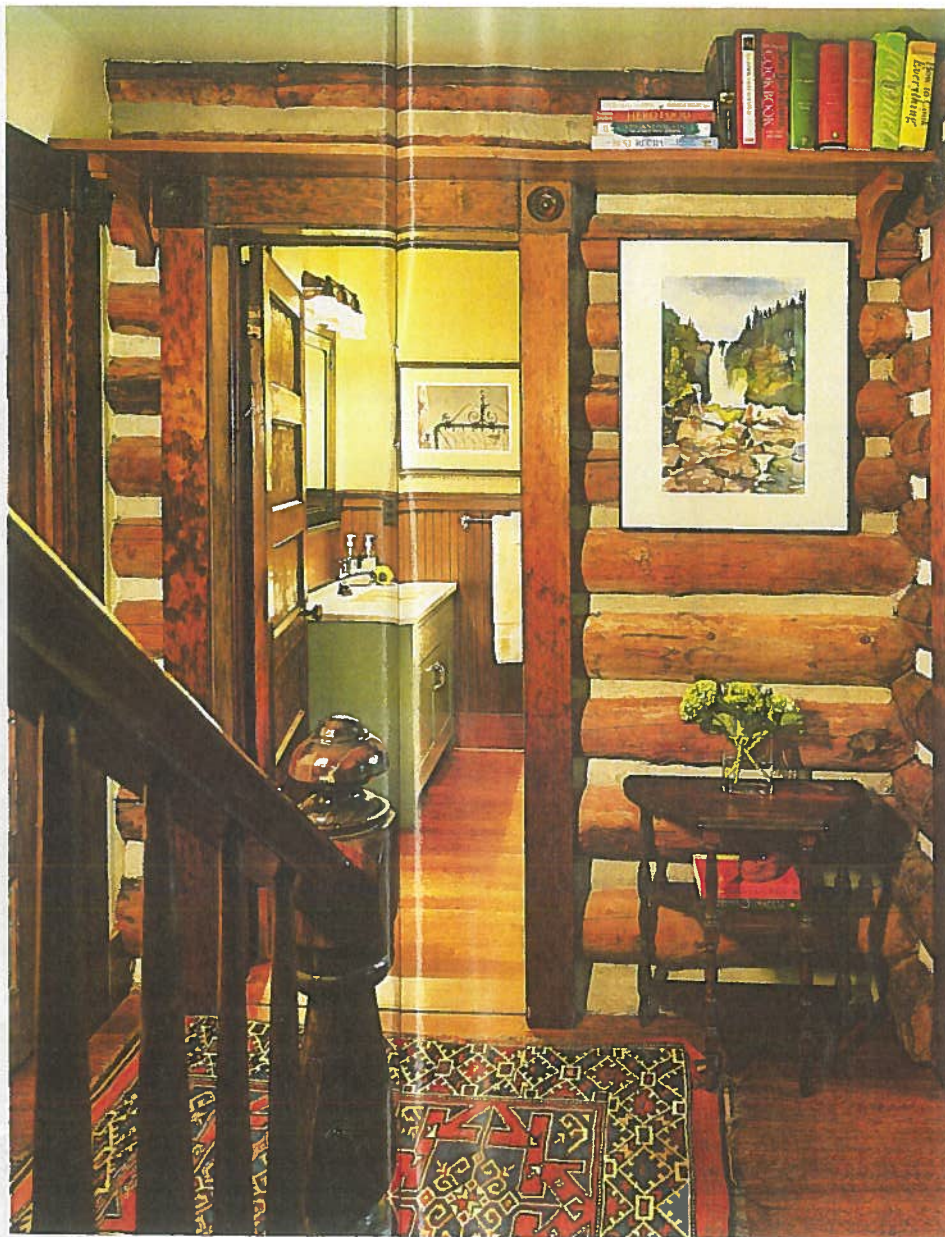
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### NEW LIVING

Patti didn't give her choice of designer/contractor even a second's thought: it was J.A.S. Design Build (lead designers Mike Freeman and Kim Clements). "When Queen Anne Books was moving, we had gotten really high bids for bookshelves. We didn't know what we were going to do, and then one day (J.A.S. owner) Joe Schneider walked in off the street and said, 'I hear you need bookshelves.' He was reasonable and on time. We called him our angel."

The history of the place, on almost a full acre, is a little shaky. "You can put this down as urban legend: It was built in 1910 (that's a fact) by two sisters and their brother as a hunting lodge," Patti says.

McCall also wanted to expose as many logs as possible in the remodel, such as here in the hallway. The main floor bathroom has also been updated but kept to period.

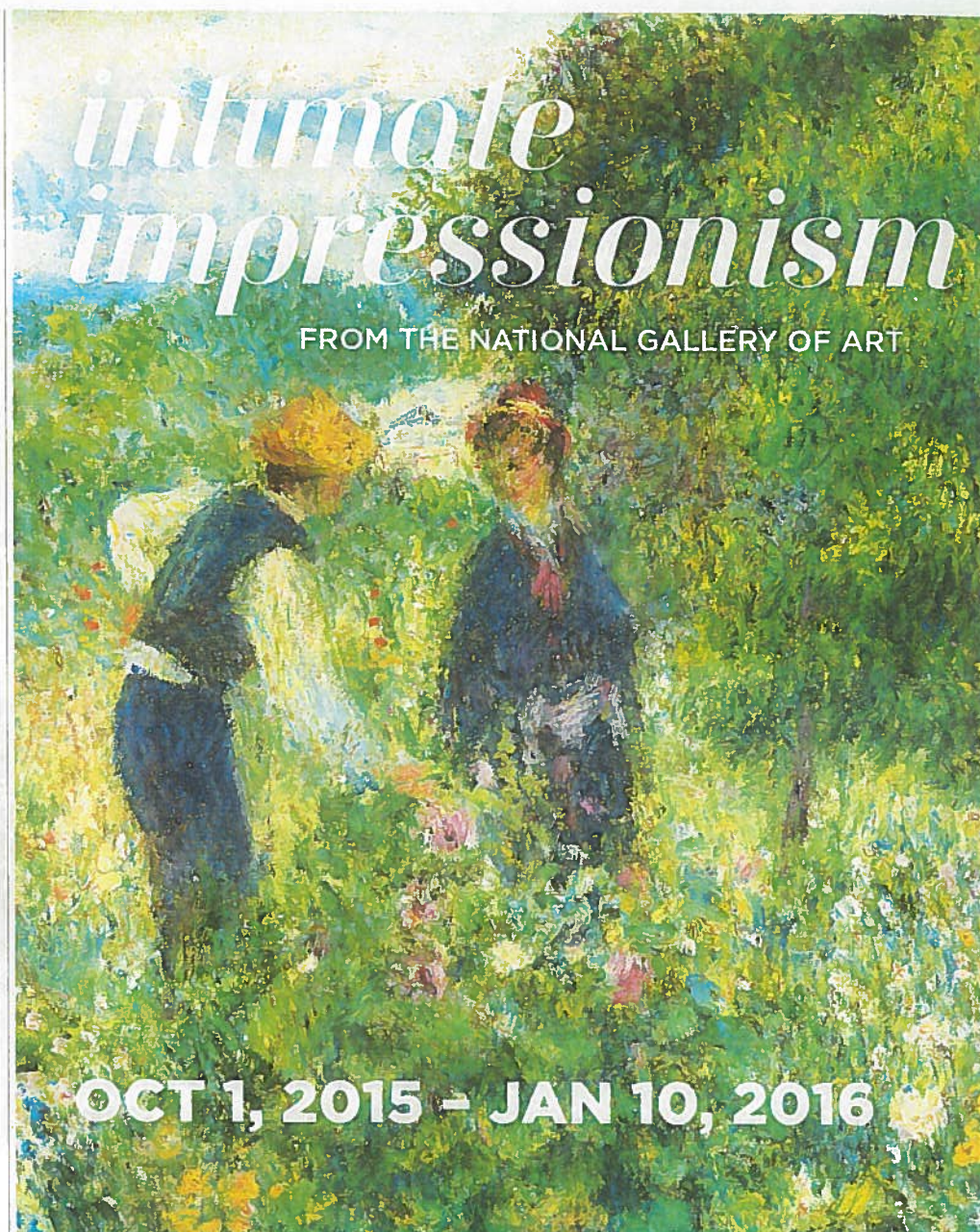
The old lodge, particularly with the updates, parties quite well. "I have a group of 25 women who come here as part of PEO (the Philanthropic Educational Organization)," she says. "We raise money to help women go to college." Nobody misses when it's Patti's turn to host.

Now the place, filled with antiques from her days as a professional in that line of work, offers an architectural custom fit. "I plan to leave here feet first," she says. "I put grab bars in the bathrooms, the laundry on the main floor."

Fortunately, Charlie Wilson, Patti's new love, understands. And he's good with that.

"I wanted to have a sanctuary that I could live in for the rest of my life," she says. ☐

*Rebecca Teagarden writes about architecture and design for Pacific NW magazine. Benjamin Benschneider is a magazine staff photographer.*



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*Picking Flowers (detail), 1875, Auguste Renoir, French, 1841-1919, oil on canvas, 21 3/8 x 25 11/16 in., National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Collection*