

Seymour Histories—Wolf's Point and the McDonalds

by Erik Lessing

All Seymour Lakers know Wolf's Point, that spit of land at the westerly point of the north/south part of Seymour and the "L." It has been a landmark of Seymour even before the current home adorned its shore. Wolf's Point, so named because of the 1838 tale of wolves ravaging sheep on Elan Hill necessitating local farmers to organize hunters to drive the wolves to the high part of the point and shoot them. Wolf's Point was originally part of the 500 acres of Camp Wayeeses (cf. November 2013 Newsletter article).

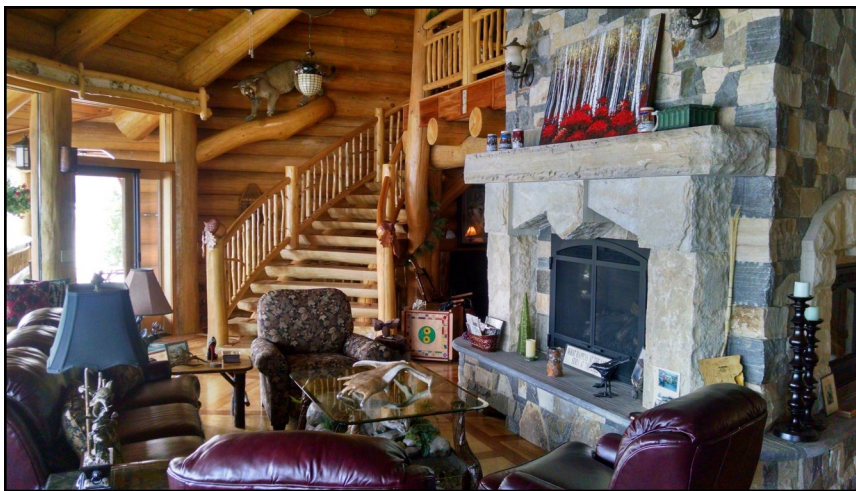
Wolf's Point is now the home of Jim and Linda McDonald who in 2003 bought the smaller log home originally built in 1992. Both Jim and Linda are Northeast Kingdom natives. They attended Lyndon Institute; both graduated from UVM and were married five years thereafter. Additionally they describe their family as five-generation Seymour Lakers as their families had other homes on the lake. Besides this Seymour home, they also have homes in Polk City, Florida and East Burke, Vermont.

Like many lake property owners, they needed more space to accommodate their two children, Ryan and Casey, family, and their many guests. They engaged Robin Muir as their contractor and set out to expand the home, keeping the log cabin construction style originally done by John Nininger and his Wooden House Company of Newbury, VT. They have succeeded expanding the home in a marvelous fashion. It is not only a spectacular home when viewed from the lake, but even more intriguing inside. Appropriately, their theme is wolves, and there are many wolf highlights throughout. Significant features are everywhere including a marvelous three-sided stone fireplace, a winding staircase, all capped by a widow's watch accessible from a unique wrap-around staircase, located inside the



chimney cavity. Great attention has been paid to the details of construction, and the inside is nothing short of stunning.

Perhaps the most important part of the home is the attention paid to environmental conditions to protect Seymour. While the home is large and hence has many impervious surfaces, much time, effort and money has been expended to alleviate runoff into the lake. All downspouts funnel into ground cisterns, the runoff from the hill behind the home is handled by a drainage system that injects the runoff back into the ground via an underground leaching system. The grass area they do have was leveled via extensive stone retaining walls to minimize surface water runoff. So con-



The central and main part of the house. To the right is one facet of the three sided fireplace. To the left is the circular staircase made from sliced portions of logs.

One of the interesting engineering and construction issues, is that new logs shrink about 1/2" per 12" of log diameter as they dry, and differences between new logs and older, drier, logs of the existing structure had to be accommodated for in the construction process, all in order to maintain a level roof line. As the log structure dries, the ridgepole actually settles, and the overall height of the building decreases.



Jim and Linda standing at their outside grill area.

gratulate Jim and Linda for this most beautiful addition to our Seymour lakeshore. □