



Left: Craig Misenar's childhood summer home, before he and his wife Mary began renovations in 1981. Above: The Misenar's remodeled dwelling in Oxford. Renovated from the roof down, their home now fits snugly into its wooded environ, with a spectacular view of the lake.

greenery...it comes alive."

In 1985, with the access now usable, they progressed to what Craig refers to as the "Beirut" phase.

"Our original intent was to square off the back of the house," Craig laughs. "My plan was for a 'quickie' little addition."

It wasn't their discovery of up to six inches of dirt that had seeped into the walls from rain runoff; or the rotting wood, studs and beams; or even the lack of plumbing that convinced them they'd have to rebuild. The reality struck when Craig happened to hit rock bottom while digging footings around the back of the

house one afternoon. To his horror, he found a gaping hole beneath the house's frame, which was resting on nothing but cinder blocks.

"We had a party one time and people were dancing and laughing about how the floor was rocking and swaying," he recalls. "We're lucky they didn't end up tumbling into the lake."

The house had been built by Craig's father in 1953 and was not intended as a year round residence. Again, they set their disappointment aside. They waited for summer and threw a series of "tear down" parties. The only thing left stand-

ing was the living room. With the help of friends, they rebuilt the structure, wall by wall, and roughed it in two weeks.

The house was built somewhat unconventionally -- from the roof down. They added a master bedroom and a spacious loft as the top floor, with doorwalls and decking overlooking the lake on both levels. And then finished off the front of the house with a deck at water level, giving the house a much larger appearance.

Their plan will be complete next summer when they finish landscaping the east side of the house and add a Jacuzzi.

They admit the process was too nightmarish for the house to be categorized as their "dream home."

The total renovation cost approxi-

mately \$75,000 and the Misenar's don't expect to make a killing on the resale, but then, after all their tribulation, they may never leave.

"As long as it was the way we wanted it when it was done, we didn't care how much we spent. That's why it took us so long," Craig points out. "We would go without something until we could get it done right."

They also agree they probably would never have bought it had they known what they were getting into.

"But we do love it here," Mary says. "We just leave the job and look forward to coming home." Craig says. "We'll be here until we're too old to make it down those steps."

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