

# MacMillan home example of early log construction

by Jennifer Barr  
Hugh MacMillan used to be with a three ring circus. He was also, among the other things, an advance drummer for a hypnotist. He is now liaison officer for the provincial archives and president of the North West Company.

In his copious spare time Hugh sells canoes and builds log buildings.

**Canadian log house**  
The MacMillan residence on 25 sideroad just east of the Guelph Line is an authentic example of early log construction and is featured in the current issue of "The Canadian Log House."

The vibrant builder is as

enthusiastic about log construction as he is about every other part of his life. He says he first became interested in the historical aspect of log building about the time he found he had a relative in the original North West Company. While studying his family tree, Hugh became fascinated with the fur trade and retraced an old fur trade route to Montreal by canoe in 1967.

The MacMillans' interest in all this early Canadian history led to the start of the North West Company, the purpose of which was to stimulate historical interest and provide a market outlet

for craftsmen with related material to sell.

**Log building course**

However, when Hugh becomes absorbed with a subject he goes all out. Soon the whole family was involved in studying early ways of life, dress, mode of living, furniture, etc.

Originally country people, Muriel and Hugh MacMillan had spent the first years of their marriage in Lochiel near Hawkesbury, Ontario, part of the Ottawa Valley.

When their Toronto suburban home was damaged by fire, the family enthusiastically sought country land in order to build their own home out of

another era.

All the teenaged children, Malcolm, Ian, Neale, and Jocelyn helped with the house but the two older boys, Malcolm and Ian spent several months with Canada's foremost log building expert, B. Allen Mackie.

Hugh was able to persuade Mackie to bring the log building school to Ontario, sponsored by Seneca College and all three MacMillans took the course. Students built the canoe museum at Haliburton as an exercise piece.

**"Piece en piece"**

The result of their learning stands high on a Nassagaweya hill framed by trees and split cedar rail fencing. A second log building, a combination work shop and guest cottage, was added later.

The large three bedroom home, completed with finished walk-out lower floor set in the hill, was completed four years ago after a mere year in the making.

During this year, the entire family squashed themselves into a trailer, something Muriel shudders about in memory.

Material for the house came from four barns purchased complete. Two log barns came from

MacGrimmon and Glegg, near Hugh's stumping grounds. Two others were local barns from Steeles Avenue and the Guelph Line near Dundas.

The four barns provided Hugh with enough material for the entire house plus the two storey workshop.

"Piece en piece" construction seemed the logical route to go with a variety of pre-cut logs. This method is not the familiar notched way of tying the logs together. Upright posts are erected at corners, door frames and window openings. Logs are placed between the uprights and milled or pegged in place. Mortar can be applied to the chinks if necessary.

The MacMillans' house is made of squared timber beautifully set off by bands of white mortar. The interior is further completed by areas of white plaster between huge beams and rafters.

Sleeped in history  
The cement block foundation is covered with reverse board and batten in rough hewn lumber. The enormous fireplace is made out of Terra Cotta stone and the windows were skillfully crafted by John Henry of Campbellville. The ornate carved exterior doors came

from Limehouse while some of the interior doors were originally part of the old Walkerton post office.

The furnishings are a mixture of genuine antiques and excellent reproductions made by the MacMillan boys. Muriel is responsible for the antique re-finishing.

Sleeped in history, the house is a living scrapbook of the MacMillans' love of those

days when their ancestors plied for the furtrade by canoe and rifle.

**Family carries on**  
Most people have had enough when they've completed one residence from scratch, but not the Macmillans.

Son Ian and friend Paul Patrick are currently building a small log dwelling for resale at the front of the

seven acre property. Ian was also responsible for most of the log buildings at the Milton Agricultural museum where he worked last summer.

Neale is presently assisting artist Joseph Dreuters of Rockwood with reconstruction of a log building at the Rockwood Academy.

Malcolm is still in construction and hopes to be continu-

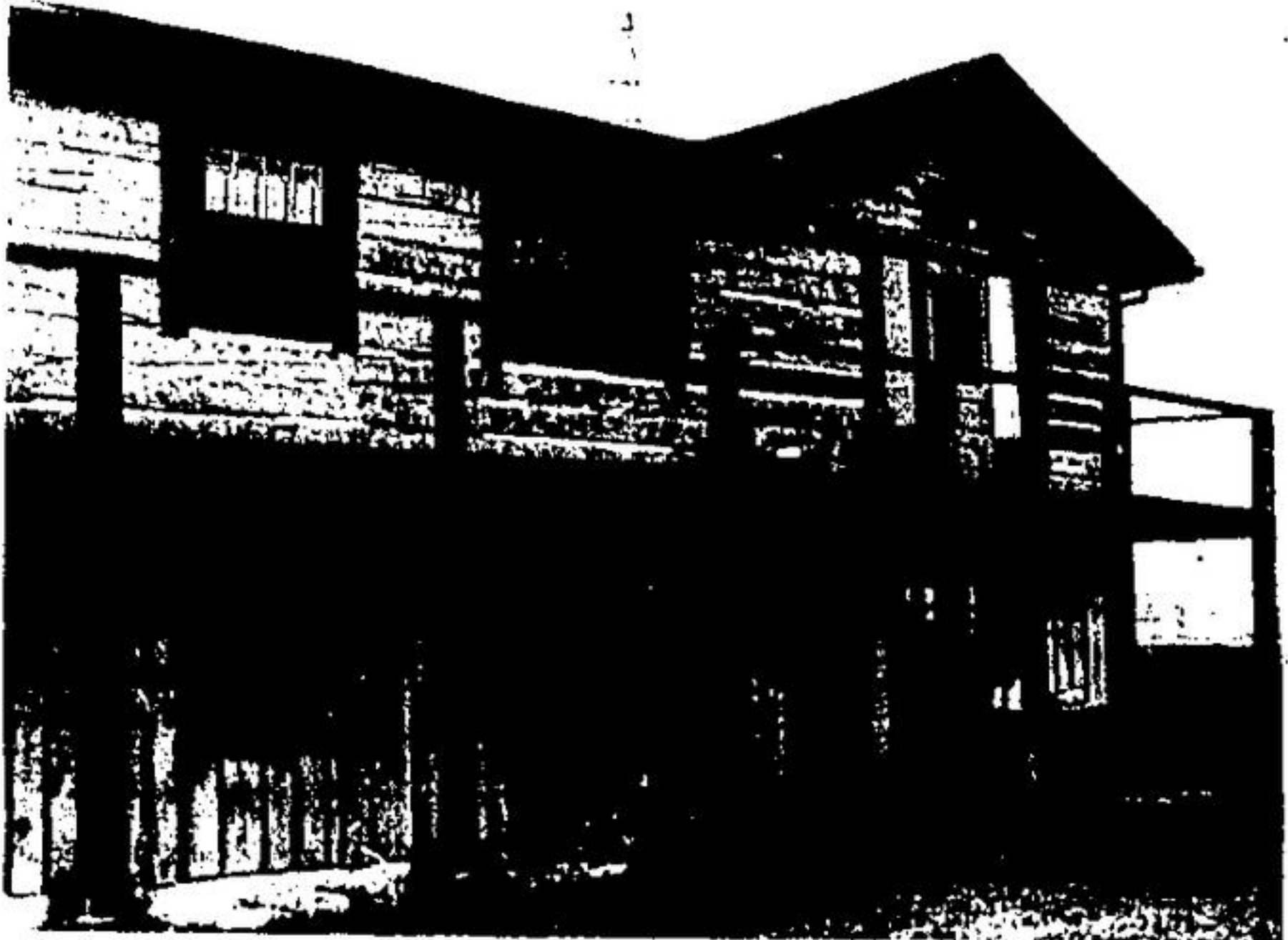
ing work on the Haliburton log museum.

Jocelyn is temporarily turning in her adze for a gymnastic suit and is off to Rumania for a course and visit with Nadia Comaneci.

Muriel keeps the whole family on an even keel (no mean feat) while Hugh continues bouncing around the country on historical trips.



TWO STOREY LOG HOUSE is set into a hill. This view of the MacMillan home faces 25 Sideroad. Hugh MacMillan and his two elder sons took a log building course before constructing their own residence.



MACMILLAN LOG HOUSE was constructed from four barns carefully dismantled and re-designed into this attractive home in Nassagaweya.



FILLED WITH ANTIQUES, the McMillan living room features white mortar between huge squared timber logs in the "piece en piece" construction of yesteryear.

## Silverwood

### 27 enjoy picnic

by Mrs. L. Giffen

On June 9, 12 ladies motored to the McMichael Art Gallery, Kleinburg. They had noon luncheon there and then toured the gallery which proved to be very interesting.

The annual Silverwood July picnic was held at Smallwood Acres, Acton on July 14 with nine members, 16 children and one visitor present.

A pot luck luncheon was enjoyed by all, set at tables among the trees.

Mrs. B. Lindsay and Mrs. J. Carmichael had charge of the games and races.

Races: eight and under: first Sheila Campbell, second Dwane Haas, third Denise Haas.

Boys 12 and under: first Douglas Campbell, Rob

Stiteri, tied, third John Carmichael.

Girls 18 and under: first Kathy Carmichael, second Beth Carmichael, third Heather Lindsay.

Mixed race: first Rob Stiteri, second Douglas Campbell.

Balloon race: first Beth and Cathy Carmichael, second John Carmichael and Douglas Campbell.

Shoe kicking: seniors, first Hans Lindauer, second Kathy Carmichael, third Beth Carmichael. Juniors, first Douglas Campbell, second John Carmichael, third Mark Lindauer, Rob Stiteri, tied.

No. of buttons in a jar, first Mrs. H. Lindauer, second Mrs. W. Norton.

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HUGH MACMILLAN examines a display of handmade pewter jewellery distributed by the North West Company, one of his enterprises.

first Mrs. I. Carmichael, second Beth Carmichael, third Mrs. W. Norton.

### Gold bike

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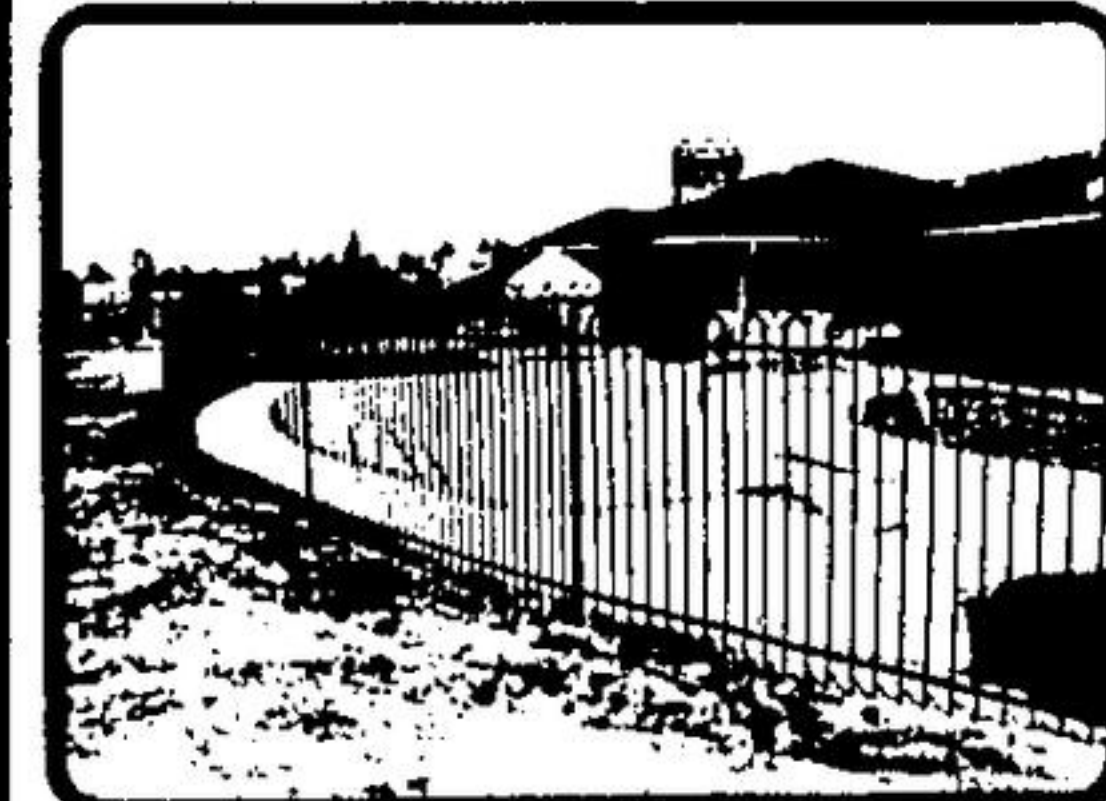


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