



## Sans logs, home stands apart

by Harry Williamson

The builder calls it an English cottage. Another person calls it "techno gothic."

The home, located in a remote area of the Fraser Valley, is hard to describe. But people who see it say it's unique — and "of the earth" — and beautiful.

Casey Pudgett, who along with his wife Lisa Steen owns the home, said they haven't been too successful in coming up with a label.

"Although it has a European feel, this was not a conscious effort from the start," Casey said. "We went through a



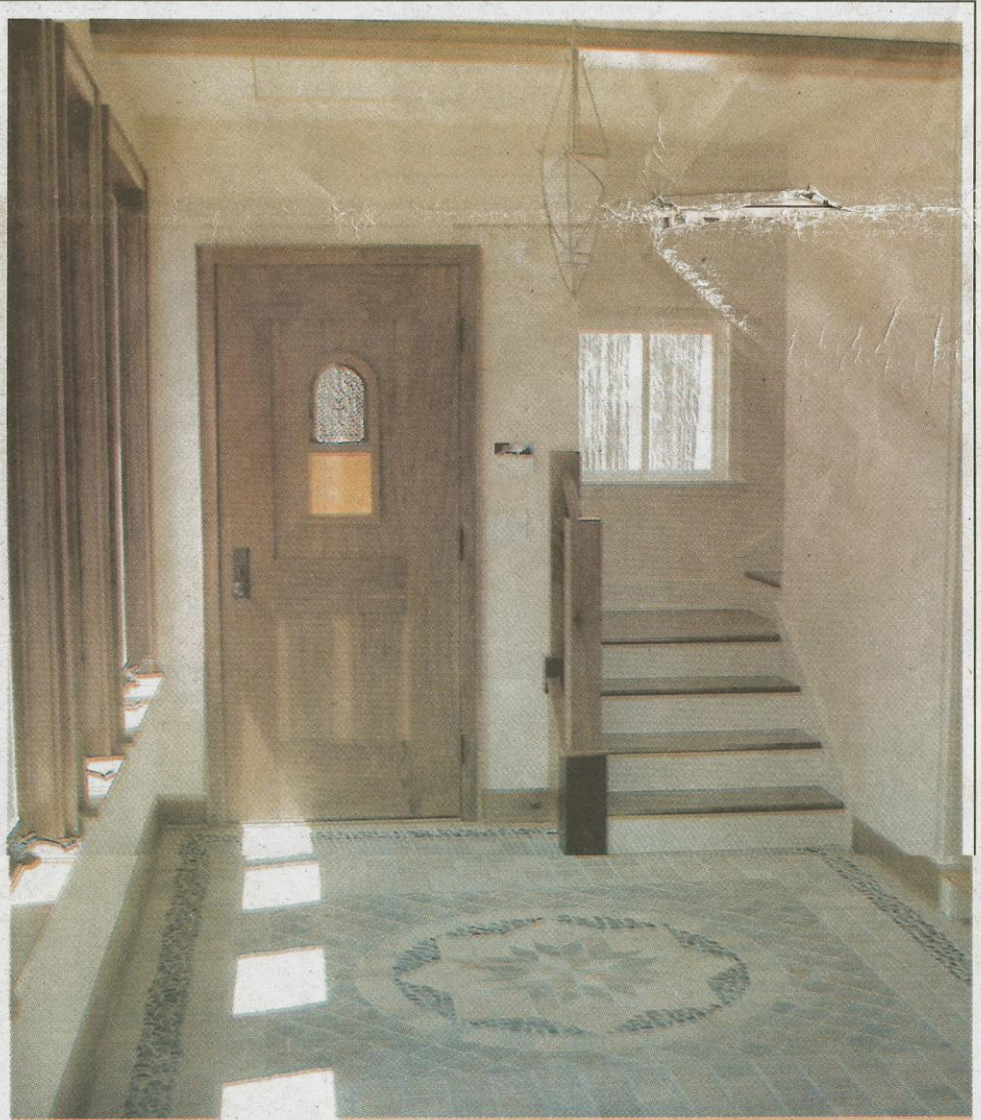
lot of books, looked at a lot of pictures of big stone houses."

Lisa also mentions a European influence in the design of the house, of picking up some of their ideas while on trips to Greece and Portugal and many other areas, including the eastern U.S.

"We wanted someplace that was comfortable, with an interior that could be described as either 'elegantly rustic' or 'rustically elegant,'" Lisa said. "This house looks like something that could have been built 100 years ago, relatively indestructible, with high-end details and filled with beautiful things."

One term that definitely doesn't apply is "mountain log."

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*Tile designs & heavy doors*

Pictured above is the entryway into the home recently built by Boxwell Construction of Tabernash and designed by Lawrence & Gomez Architects of Boulder for Casey Pudgett and his wife Lisa Steen. Pictured at left is the exterior entry to the heavy cherry front door, custom built by Grand Woodworks, and the pillars encased in small boulders.

# Home has natural, earthy look

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Nor is it an attempt to build a mountain second home that is simply more ornate and bigger than the next.

"I recently did a tour of some big new, massive houses in Bachelor's Gulch near Vail," said the builder, Bob Boxwell, owner of Boxwell Construction in Tabernash. "We were all struck by how much alike the houses were, only each was trying to be bigger and more ostentatious than the one next door."

The home Bob built for Casey and Lisa is not massive. It is approximately 3,500 square feet, with several smaller rooms. It has what could almost be termed an "earthy look," blending neatly with the environment. The exterior is granite stones. The beams supporting the front entryway



## English cottage

English cottage is one description given this home, which was constructed in the Fraser Valley by Boxwell Construction for a Denver couple. A front view is shown above, with the rear of the house shown below.

and roof over the rear deck are embedded in small boulders. The drive at the rear of the house, leading down to

the garage, is bordered with huge boulders. Natural materials are used everywhere.

"It's very organic, like it emerged from the earth," said Casey, who is an attorney for the U.S. Interior Department.

He and Lisa were both raised in the west, he near Colorado Springs and she in Arizona. They met while attending the University of Colorado.

When it came time to build their second home they knew two things — they wanted to be in the Fraser Valley and they didn't want what might be thought of as a typical mountain home.

"We had spent time at Winter Park,

skiing and coming to concerts, and we knew years ago that we wanted to be in the valley," Casey said. "We had both been around Western all of our lives, and we also knew we weren't moving out here to simply build a big log home."

But at first, with just some ideas and a few sketches and pictures clipped from magazines, they weren't exactly sure what they wanted.

The first step involved a lengthy planning process that started three years ago with the architects, Juana Gomez and Phil Lawrence — of the firm Lawrence & Gomez Architects in Boulder — who they met through a

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# Owners, architects & builder combine



GREAT ROOM — The center portion, shown above, is the great room, which divides the remainder of the house into the guest rooms and the owner's side, which includes the master bedroom, and the kitchen and dining room.

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mutual CU friend. Casey and Lisa were living in Washington, D.C. when they bought the lot. Juana recalls first spending a weekend just hiking the acreage, looking at the various views and topography.

She said that the couple was different from many clients, who either "take it all on themselves," or "just give it to the architects," giving very little input.

"Lisa and Casey are just wonderful to work with. We are also helping them with their loft in LoDo (in downtown Denver)," Juana said.

The early meetings between the architects, who are married, and the clients were involved with what Casey remembers as the home's functional requirements — lifestyle questions, such as if they cooked a lot or planned to entertain a lot. Juana said architects often start by trying to identify the purpose of the home, then get into more and more specifics, such as styles, lighting and finishes. They had what she recalls as "marathon meetings," talking and going through piles of books and magazines.

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## Pebble tile work patterned after drives seen in Greece



**A BLACK DIAMOND KITCHEN** — The kitchen includes plenty of natural light, along with a small eating nook.

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Casey said they developed two principal concepts.

First, they wanted a center great room that had "a wall of windows" facing out to their southern view of James and Perry peaks. There is also a den that opens off the great room. And second, the great room would separate the house into two portions — one being the owner's side, including the upstairs master bedroom, the kitchen and formal dining room, and the other being the guest side, with their bedrooms also upstairs.

"When Lisa and I are alone in the house, we can close off the guest side," Casey said.

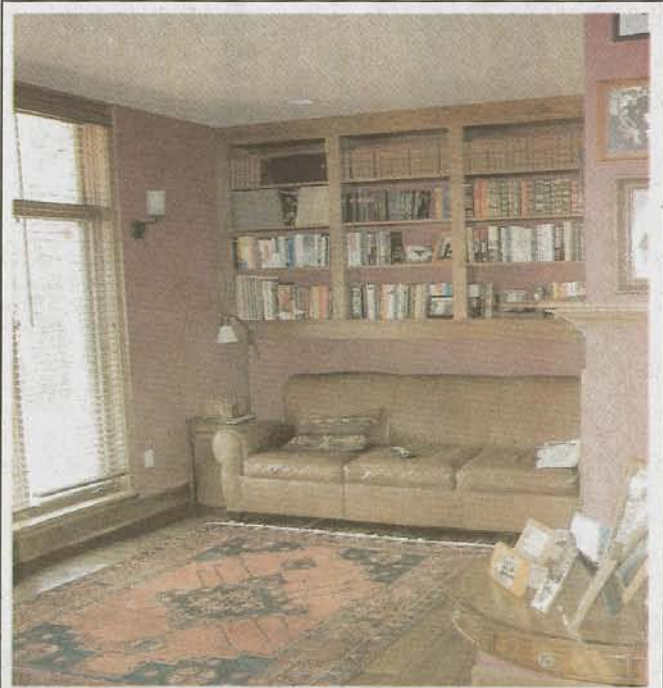
Turning right from the entryway, there is a hallway that runs alongside the great room, connecting the guest side of the house. Designed to provide passage without having to go through the great room, the hallway has a half wall — glass above — that allows one to look through the entire house and see the view.

In fact, this hallway is almost a work of art, due to its unique finishes and colors, featuring the work on the floor tile that includes patterns made of black pebbles, each individually placed.

These pebbles were also used in other areas, including the downstairs powder room.

The tiles in the entryway are Italian, also placed in specifically designed patterns, including circles.

Lisa said the use of whole pebbles — not sliced ones, which gave an appearance they didn't want — was suggested by a trip to Greece where "driveways were constructed with a mosaic of beach pebbles." She said that pebbles are used in streets in Portugal.



**COZY WARMTH** — The den, pictured above is one of several rooms decorated with darker colors to give a sense of being in a warm and friendly place.

"There is a sort of an ancient look about them," she said.

Juana said very long hours were spent in selecting interior materials, the lighting and other fixtures, such as wall sconces and sinks. She gives much of the credit to Lisa, praising her sense of design and color. Lisa is a graphic designer, working primarily in the print media.

"Lisa has a great eye for color and a unique sense of style," Casey said, adding that "she is the brains of the operation."

Boxwell said that although he had some doubts about some of the color choices, that they all worked "wonderfully."

"It's amazing how each room, for the den to the guest bedrooms, are distinctive and work on their own. I've taken some of these ideas and worked them into my own home," he said.

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## Color plays a big part in the house

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Lisa said she likes working with what she termed as "a family of colors," deciding on jewel tones for the house.

"In big open spaces, like the great room, I chose shades that were light and airy, while many of the smaller rooms, such as the den and guest bedrooms, are much darker, created almost a cocoon that envelops you," Lisa said. "The dining room is somewhere between, a room where the colors are cozy and warm."

She said she was "pretty adventurous" with the use of color — and "very happy with the outcome."

Lisa said she likes the sense of permanence the house has, due to the use of stone, wide-plank wood



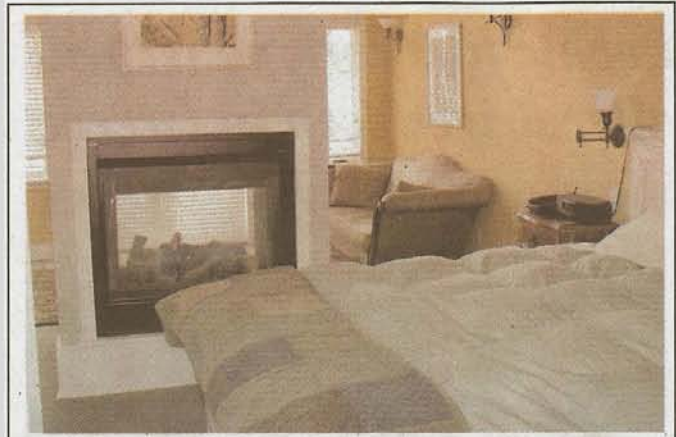
This "bowl," located on a cabinet in the great room, is in reality a sink.

floors, the heavy doors and the heavy iron door knobs and fixtures. The doors were custom made of cherry by Jack Conrad at Grand Woodworks in Tabernash, which also did all of the cabinetry work. The interior woodwork is walnut.

Casey said he especially likes the heavy doors.

"I like big, thick, solid doors. They add to the permanence of the home," he said.

He is also pleased with the earthy character of the home, and how it seems to blend into the surrounding environment, a feeling that he said will be more complete when the landscaping is complete. He also likes the way the garage is tucked around, and partially buried at the rear of the house.



In the master bedroom, a fireplace divides the bed area from a sitting room.

"The garages in many large, high-end homes often strike us in a negative way by just how prominent they are," Casey said. "The garage is often the biggest and most noticeable part of the house, and the least attractive part."

He said that their house is the result of more than a year's meetings with the architects, followed by four months of discussions with the builder before work ever started. He said the builder was located after the architects asked some questions at local lumber yards about who was known for building quality, higher end homes, coming up with the names of four firms.

"After meeting with each one, Lisa and I were impressed with how Boxwell was well organized and al-

so his confidence in being able to do the job," Casey said. Some of the contractors looked at our house plans and said, 'Well, this is different. I guess we could do it,' which didn't give you a lot of confidence. Bob had no doubt."

Lisa said she especially likes the tile work, the color and the openness and beauty of the great room.

"When we get the outdoor space done, it will all be fabulous," she said.

The painting was done by Moore Brothers, and the tile work was done by Joe Erlebacher of Always Tile. The kitchen was designed by Black Diamond Kitchens in Fraser.

Boxwell said Larry Steffen was the "super" superintendent on the job and John "Westy" Westerlund was the project manager.