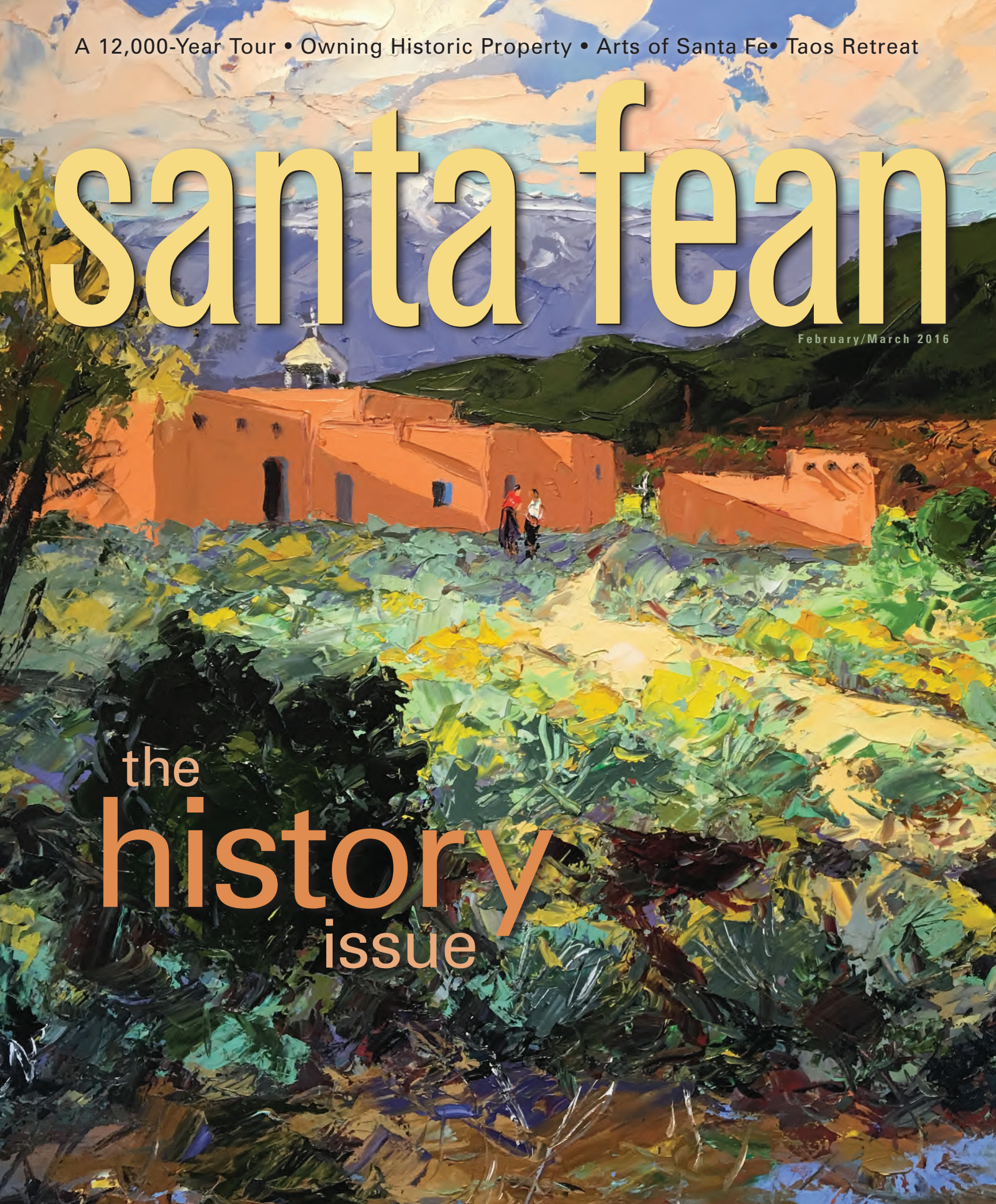


A 12,000-Year Tour • Owning Historic Property • Arts of Santa Fe • Taos Retreat

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February/March 2016

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A GREAT ROOM INDEED. This is the space where Susan and Richard's family gathers, the adults catching up on life and the kids enjoying friendly rivalries over classic board games. The drama of the Taos Ski Valley lies just beyond the window that rises almost 20 feet to the rafters. Beneath elegant custom chandeliers and before a roaring fire, old family traditions are passed down and new ones made in this one-of-a-kind cabin and retreat that is a legacy of love. Read all about it on page 45. *Shaw Architecture LLC, shawsf.com*

Windows: Sierra Pacific Windows;
custom chandeliers: Uncommon Lighting;
fireplace: Tierra Woodstoves.

by Amy Gross

photographs by David O. Marlow



legacy of love

it's all about family, friends,
and skiing at a Taos retreat

OVER THE STREAMBED AND THROUGH THE woods is an amazing cabin in the Taos Ski Valley that's enjoyed by many lucky individuals. While its predecessor, which stood in the same spot as the current cabin, was the quintessential rustic getaway, this gorgeous residence is a thoughtful reimagining of the cabin in the woods concept, a beautiful and amenity-filled retreat that can be enjoyed—comfortably—12 months of the year.

Susan and Richard have many memories of that first cabin, built over a period of several years in the early '70s by Susan's late parents, Hugh and Carol Gormley, and one of her uncles. Hugh and Carol passed the cabin down to Susan and her two sisters.

Steve Shaw, AIA, of Shaw Architecture LLC, designed the current cabin after meeting Susan and Richard through Taos-area homebuilder Jim Henderson of Noble House, Inc. Shaw gives serious props to Susan's dad for the impressive and thrifty design of the original house, particularly given how difficult the site accessibility was back then. Simply furnished and technology-free, it was what Richard calls "a common man's cabin"—a perfect, low-tech getaway.

Despite its excellent craftsmanship, it became apparent a few years ago that the cabin had reached the end of its shelf life, and following the second of two

wintertime frozen pipe fiascos, Susan and Richard realized that simply remodeling the original home wasn't going to cut it. They tasked Shaw with scrapping his remodeling plans and starting over with a teardown of the original cabin.

"It certainly made life easier," Shaw notes. "We were chasing some serious issues around the site—one of the major ones, of course, being that we were building at 9,800 feet. Being able to start from scratch allowed us to come up with an optimal design."

For Susan, one of the driving forces in that design was the continuation of the tradition of her parents in providing a retreat and a gathering place for family—a place where they could do things together, away from technology. "What's nice is that we can do that with



Above: The dining room, naturally, is large enough to accommodate a crowd of guests, with a massive pedestal table and Windsor armchairs. An oversized mirror hangs at one end, reflecting the great room and its expansive windows on the other end.

Right: When the house is full, the kitchen—which is right off the entrance to the home—is jumping. Susan topped her 11-foot island with reclaimed teak sourced through Sequoia of Santa Fe. A staggered row of merry orange pendant lights from Allbright & Lockwood picks up the warm tones of the custom alder cabinetry and barstool seating.



this house, but there's room to grow," says Susan, who quips that the transformation from old cabin to new "is almost a Beverly Hillbillies difference."

With seven bedrooms, a finished basement, a large kitchen, a gathering room, and, happily, excellent plumbing, this new residence, though built on the same site as the original cabin, has a slightly larger footprint because of its three stories and is certainly able to accommodate a crowd. Noble House, Inc. brought Shaw's plans to life, and both Shaw and Susan, who is no beginner when it comes to remodeling and building, were impressed with the craftsmanship of Henderson's woodworkers.

"I've never seen people who cared so much about their product and put so much love and art into what they do," Susan marvels of the textured columns that divide the kitchen from the entryway, and the glass-smooth railings leading to the second floor. She designed the interiors and sourced materials for the new home; much of the furniture came from ACC Santa Fe and The Raven (formerly Recollections).

To the homeowners' delight, Shaw captured a view from every window—and on this choice site, the views are spectacular. Going for a treehouse effect, Shaw gave each cozy, comfortable bedroom a pair of French doors and a balcony. In the great room, enormous windows



"We started with a window at the kitchen sink and went from there," says architect Steve Shaw. Large and ultra-functional, the kitchen features custom cabinetry by Northern Lights Woodworks that plays off a Northern New Mexico-style backsplash from Statements in Tile/Lighting/Kitchens/Flooring.



Books, rather than electronic devices, are the name of the game at this low-tech retreat. A library at the top of the artisan-crafted stairwell reminds visitors to slow it down and grab a good read.

The new cabin continues Susan's parents' tradition of providing a retreat and a gathering place for family.




Cozily and simply furnished, each of the seven bedrooms proudly features French doors that lead out to individual balconies to mimic a treehouse effect.



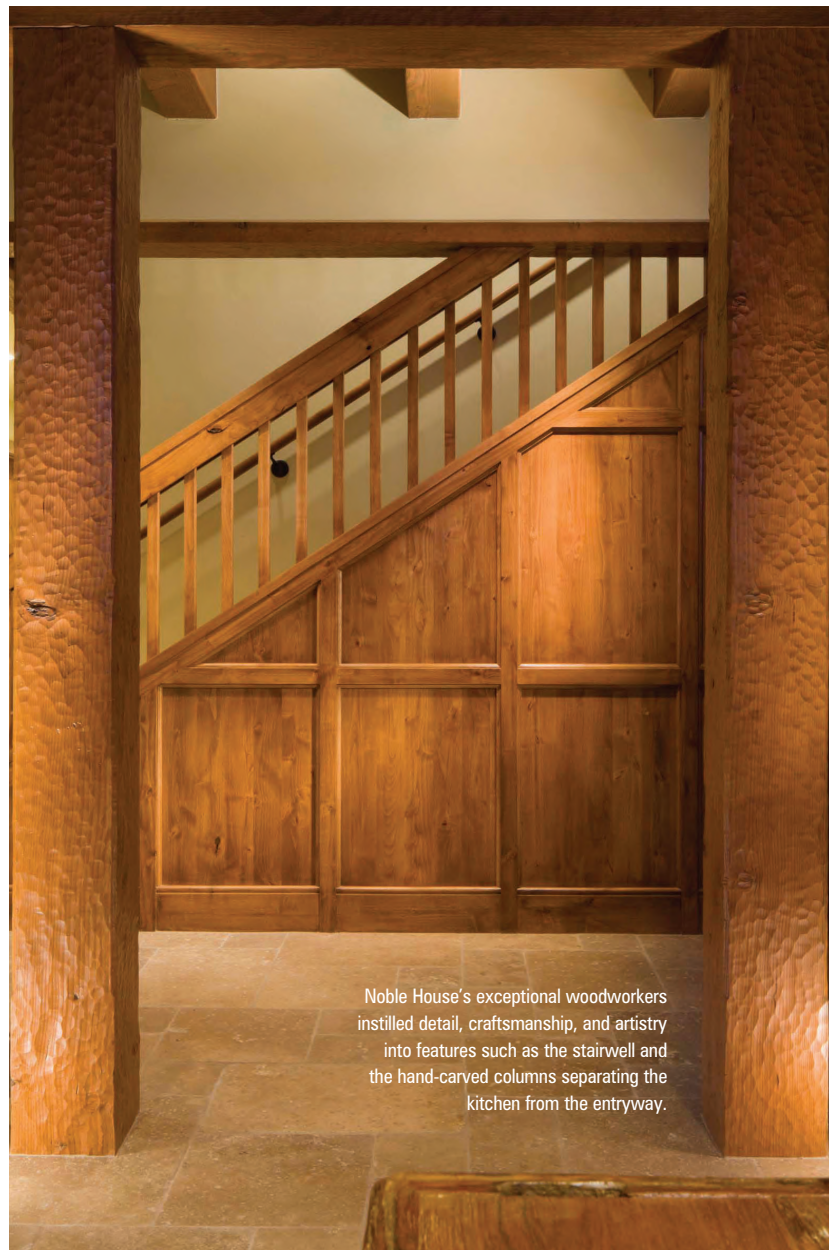
A bathroom features his-and-hers granite countertops from Granite Concepts in Taos, warm cabinetry, and above the shower, a porthole window.



To the homeowners' delight, there's a view from every window—and on this choice site, the views are spectacular.



Susan got creative when furnishing the new home. She lucked upon a huge consignment of pieces liquidated from a single house at one consignment shop, supplementing those furnishings with a few new pieces and aspen beds from the old cabin.



Noble House's exceptional woodworkers instilled detail, craftsmanship, and artistry into features such as the stairwell and the hand-carved columns separating the kitchen from the entryway.

rise almost 20 feet to the wooden trusses, offering a breathtaking, direct view to the mountain peaks and overlooking a streambed that rushes with water during the summer.

In addition to impressive green building features and super-insulating construction methods, the cabin boasts modern luxuries like radiant heated floors and a boot room with boot dryers and ski warmers (where it's situated on the mountain, the cabin is ski in, ski out). "My dad would think this is a little much," says Susan with a laugh, "but my mother would love it!"

Design- and comfort-wise, this lovely new cabin is a far cry from the rustic getaway Susan's parents built decades ago, but their legacy is keenly felt when Susan and Richard's children, grandchildren, and extended family gather to ski, celebrate holidays, and simply get away from the hustle and bustle.

"The cabin was built with inherited money, so in a sense my parents built it," says Susan. "It was a great gift." **sf**