



The gabled second-floor addition (outlined at left in black) replaces a shallow shed roof, providing ample headroom for a new sitting area.

3 Old attic gets a makeover

“A 14-year-long story of love and sweat equity” is how Russ Widstrand describes the gradual transformation of his 1940s cabin in Montana. When Russ and his wife, Barbara, bought it, the cabin had one great thing going for it: Flathead Lake lay just a few

yards from their front yard. Lots of unglamorous but necessary tasks, like installing a new roof, filled their summer vacations.

Remodeling the attic was the final phase. “We could only stand up in the middle of the old attic—it was like being in a tunnel,” Barbara says. By adding a pair of peaked dormers, the couple gained room for a new master bath and a tall sitting area with lake views. The upstairs also gained a master bedroom, sewing area, and storage space.

“The closest hardware store was more than an hour away, so we made a lot of things ourselves,” says Russ, who ripped all the lap siding and helped fabricate the trim. Mark Sauer, a contractor from nearby Somers, helped them through their remodel, which respects the style of the original structure. “Now we call it Nap Ranch,” Barbara says.

—PETER O. WHITELEY
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