

# ***AT HOME IN THE TREES***

## ***2636 Shoal Road***

We bought this house the day we saw it. It certainly had issues, but it had great bones, real character and so much potential. What follows is coverage of some of the challenges, and some of the solutions and additions, that we have done since 2016.

### **OUTSIDE**

The driveway was challenging when we put the offer in, and when the moving company that moved the previous owners out tore it up, it was simply dangerous. Re-grading and widening the drive was one of the first things that we did. We also added parking at the bottom of the drive.

Water was another major issue. The water feed is from Shoal Road and rises about 85 feet to the house. By the time it gets here, water pressure is only 15 psi. We installed a 60 gallon cistern and pump to bring the pressure back up to between 50 and 60 psi.

The garden was fenced but it was dilapidated. There was a buck sleeping in the garden with his harem the day we moved in. We replaced all the garden fencing along with two new gates.

The house had no place to store tools so we built a small workshop under the second floor deck. We also added a laundry-stoop and clothes line. Under the second floor bedroom we built some shelving for storage, and sheathed the floor joints in plywood.

Both second floor dormers had rather tired cedar shake roofs. We had them replaced with metal to match the rest of the house.

It is not as big a deal as it was even a few years ago, but power does go off on Pender. We installed a generator pretty early on, but thankfully, have not had to use it much. Sure is handy when needed though.

### **FIRST FLOOR**

The bathroom on the first floor was completely redone...paint, wall tiles, flooring and lighting.

Storage is always an issue. The two crawl spaces had shelving added to make storage easier.

The bedroom on this floor is not that large, and it seemed a little cramped, so we opened up the wall into the crafts room and installed two pocket doors with semi-opaque glass. You can open the room up when needed and close it up for privacy. We also renovated the walk-in closet.

We have always loved living with woodstoves. The original living room stove was old, small and rather ugly. It was replaced with one of the best, and we think most beautiful, stoves you can buy. We added a tiled heatshield to make it WETT compliant.

The island countertop was refinished and the entire first floor has been painted.

## **SECOND FLOOR**

The ceiling under the third floor was unfinished. We insulated the ceiling, finished it in T&G cedar and trimmed out the north windows. There was no wall on the south side of the third floor. It was really just an open loft. We closed that in, insulated, added a window over the stairs, and finished in T&G. A trap door was installed so that the third floor didn't need to be heated if not in use.

The upstairs bathroom was, to put it politely, rather rough. It was gutted and redone. We **love** this bathroom.

The door leading out back was originally solid and rather tired looking. It was replaced with one with a window that could be opened for ventilation and light.

We added a ceiling fan in the open space in front of the French doors leading to the deck.

Some storage was added under the south side dormer.

The entire floor was repainted.

## **THIRD FLOOR**

As mentioned earlier, the third floor was really just an open loft. We installed new flooring, new walls, added some lighting and built a small closet. We also built a chase around the chimney from the second-floor stove, and replaced the door leading onto the third-floor deck with one that matched the rest of the doors in the house. It is now a cute little third bedroom.

## **HEATING**

Finally, we would like to talk briefly about the heating of this home. There are several options. There is hot water radiant floor heat on the first two floors. There are also wood stoves on both floors. These come in very handy if there is a power outage. Radiant heat is not the most economical way to heat a home, though it is very pleasant. In 2022 we had a heat pump system installed. There is a head on both the first and second floors and a third could be added. After experiencing the heat dome we felt that we should have air-conditioning. As a side benefit, it also cut our hydro bill in half. Last year our total bill was \$1,265.89. Installing the heat pump changed two things for us. First of all, we only use the radiant heat for a week or two when the temperature gets below freezing. Secondly, we put the woodstove on mostly in the evenings for ambience as much as for warmth. There are 9 years left on the heat pump warranty.

So that's the story of our love affair with this special Pender home. We hope that whoever the new owners are love this home as much as we have. The only reason we are leaving is two surgeries and a possible third upcoming. Sadly, it is time to move on to the next adventure.