



*Elaine Roberts stands outside the Cosby Cabin, moved to the property from Cosby, Tenn. in 1997.*

Cabin in the Woods

# Boyd Mountain Log Cabins

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BRUCE AND ELAINE ROBERTS HAD A SIMPLE HOPE - A SECLUDED PLACE WITH SOME OF THE CONVENIENCES, YES, BUT NO BELLHOPS AND VALETS. REALLY JUST A SIMPLE AND COZY SPOT NEAR THE SMOKIES WHERE THE TWO OF THEM COULD HIKE, TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS AND, OF COURSE, "SET A SPELL."

BOYD MOUNTAIN LOG CABINS WAS PERFECT.

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*by Marla Hardee Milling • Photography by Bruce Roberts*





*The back yard of the Cosby cabin features its own private deck.*

**“INDEPENDENT TRAVELERS”** – that’s how Bruce Roberts defines the style he and his wife Elaine share when they head out on a new excursion. The Powder Springs, Ga. residents prefer a place without a bellhop to wheel luggage to a room. All they need, Roberts says, are a few modern conveniences: a kitchen, maybe a washer and dryer, and a location giving a feeling of seclusion. For the Robertses, the ideal vision of a getaway fits perfectly into a mountain cabin, and with

an internet search and a bit of serendipity they found Boyd Mountain Log Cabins & Tree Farm in the Jonathan Valley area of Haywood County, N.C., just minutes from Waynesville and Maggie Valley.

Roberts chuckles as he recalls the luck of landing a weeklong stay at Boyd Mountain. The retirees had pinpointed the Great Smoky Mountains as the focus of a trip in the fall of 2010. They knew they wanted to stay on the North Carolina side of the park, but they didn’t really know what was available. They explored the websites of different cabins in the area, but nothing seemed to excite them until they hit upon Boyd Mountain.

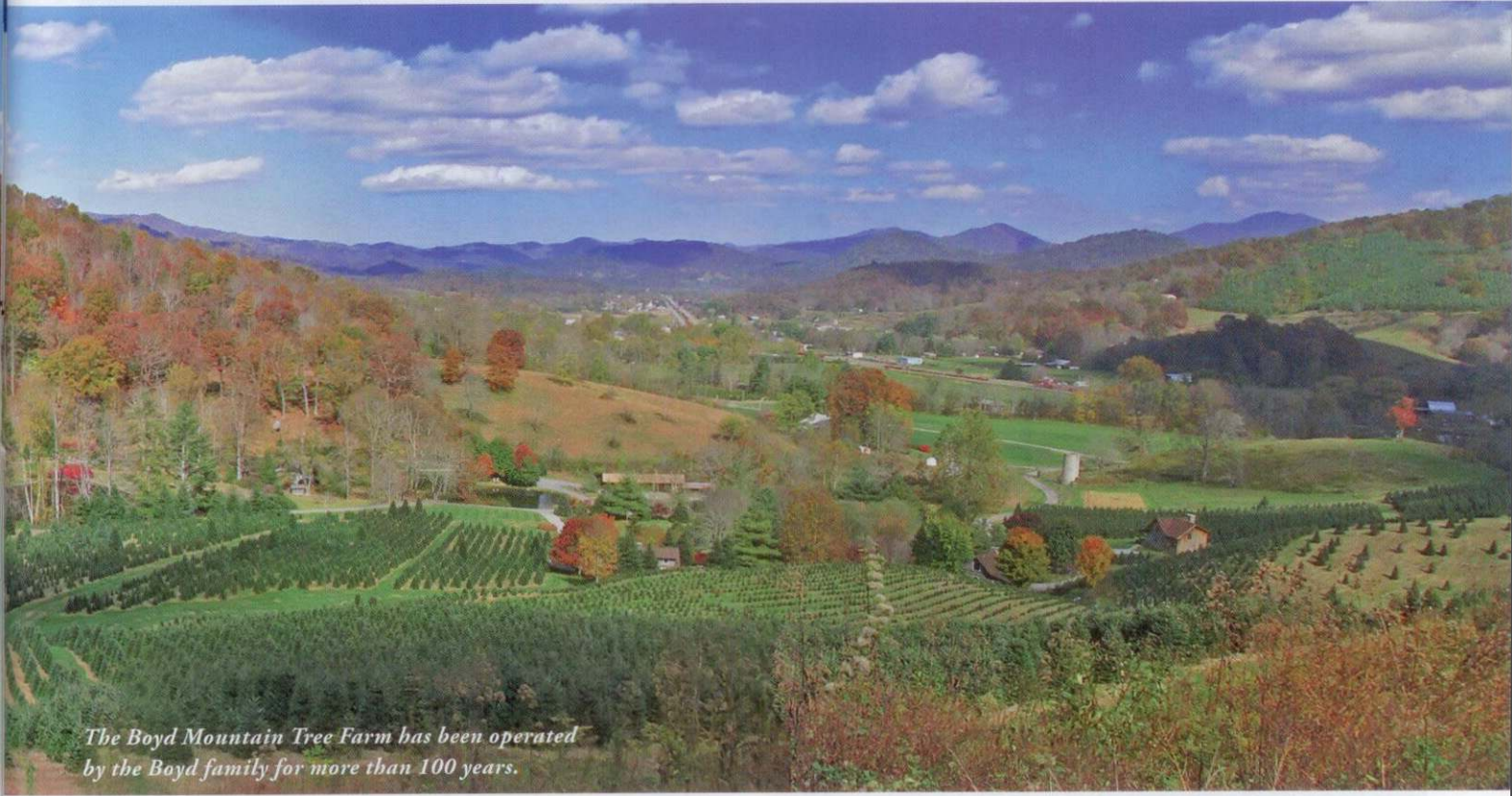
Unfortunately, since their stay would hit during the peak leaf season, the website showed all the cabins were booked. Here’s a lesson in never taking everything at face value. Roberts made a call to Boyd Mountain and quickly booked the Little Cosby Cabin after being told of a cancellation. Little Cosby is the smallest cabin on the property, but the one-bedroom place proved magical to the Robertses.

**BEAUTIFUL SCENERY AND WILDLIFE TOO**

“We would take coffee and sit on the porch in the morning and watch the sun come up over the mountains,” he says. “There’s beautiful light coming into that valley.”

As a photographer, Roberts took note of the light streaming around the property and he and his wife





*The Boyd Mountain Tree Farm has been operated by the Boyd family for more than 100 years.*

also kept a watch out for wildlife. One day while walking around the property they spotted a couple of deer. “As soon as we came around a bend, they scattered,” he says. “There were two that we saw.” But they didn’t glimpse the elk that have been reported to come onto the Boyds’ property.

“That’s a great success story of the reintroduction of the elk to the eastern mountains,” adds Roberts, referring to the experimental release of elk into the Great Smoky Mountains National Park beginning in 2001. Elk once freely roamed the southern Appalachian region before being eliminated through too much hunting and loss of habitat.

During the day, the Robertses ventured into the park to hike and explore. They’d return to the cabin in late afternoon and watch the ducks and geese on the ponds or play with the two resident dogs, Dixie and Fraser. They enjoyed the feeling of being away from the hubbub, yet close enough to find anything they needed – from nearby stores to restaurants.

**FLASHBACK TO THE PAST**

During the week, they had a chance to poke their heads into some of the other cabins on the property that were vacated between guest stays.

“Every cabin is unique,” says Roberts. “They’ve taken all these original cabins and put them back together structurally while adding all the modern conveniences. Some of the original cabins had news-



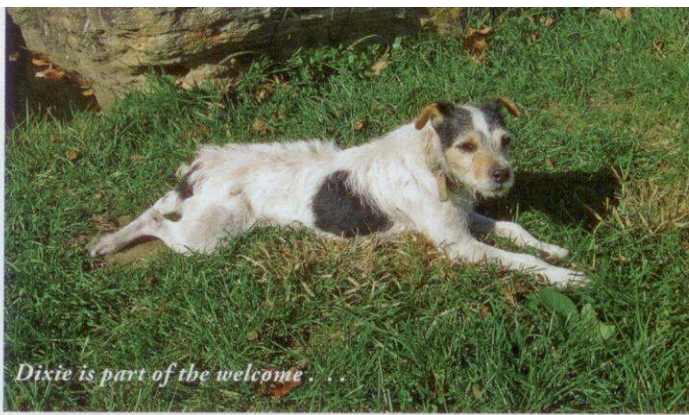
paper and comic strips pasted on the walls. In certain sections, they left remnants of those to show what it was like.”

They all have porches with a ready supply of firewood.

“Ours had a porch in front with rocking chairs, and a deck in back with a grill, chairs and table,” Roberts adds. “We couldn’t have made a better choice.” *(Please see next page for Boyd Mtn. specifics.)*

*Even the office at Boyd Mountain has a rustic, welcoming appeal.*





*Dixie is part of the welcome . . .*



*. . . and so is Fraser.*

## BOYD MOUNTAIN CABINS: THE DETAILS

Dan Boyd and his wife Betsy are living out a dream on land that's been in his family for more than 100 years. Originally a working farm maintained by his grandparents, David J. Boyd and Kate Moody Boyd, the 130 acres of the family property were purchased by Dan from relatives in 1972. He set about growing Christmas trees and restoring antique log cabins.

They planted their first Fraser Fir

Christmas trees in 1984 and began harvesting them seven years later. In 1989, they restored the Shelton Laurel Cabin from Madison County, N.C., and offered it as a rental cabin. Today, the Boyds have seven rental cabins on their property, each with its own unique character and history:

**Shelton Laurel:** A two-story authentic log cabin from the Shelton Laurel community in Madison County, N.C., it sits overlooking the

largest of two ponds on the property. It's restored as a two-bedroom cabin and can accommodate four people.

**Meadow Fork:** Restored in 1993, this two-story cabin from the Meadow Fork community in Madison County, N.C., will accommodate up to six people.

**Millstone:** In 1994 this two-story cabin was restored on the Boyds' property. Originally located in the Asheville area, the three-bedroom

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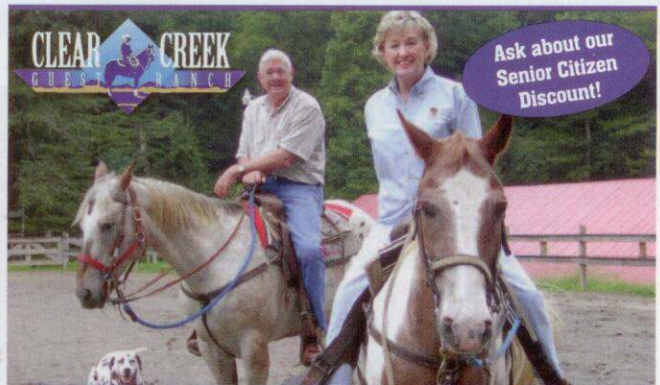


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See page 21 for more details.



cabin now serves as a "home away from home" for up to eight people.

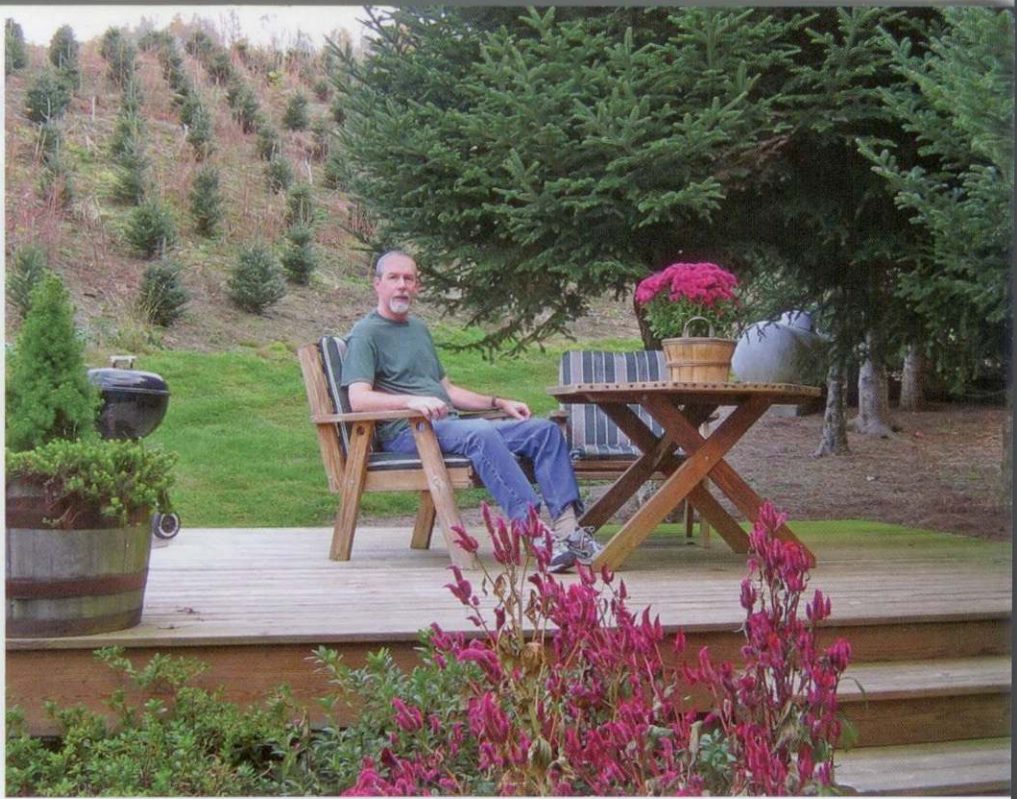
**Long Branch:** The original location of this two-story cabin was Whittier, N.C. in the Great Smoky Mountains. The Boyds restored it in 1995 and offer it as a three-bedroom cabin sleeping up to eight people.

**Little Cosby and Cosby:** These cabins were both restored in 1997 and were originally located in Cosby, Tenn. The first is the smallest on the property and sleeps two. The second accommodates up to six people.

**Clinch Valley:** Moved from the Clinch Mountain area of northeast Tennessee, this is the newest cabin. Restored in 2008, it offers four bedrooms and three baths.

**Want to go?**

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Bruce Roberts, relaxing on the patio: "We couldn't have made a better choice."

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