

Dumbwaiter Brings Wood To Fireplace

When Sherwood and Elizabeth Beatty built their dream home near Barton, Vermont, the transplants from Louisiana knew they wanted to heat with wood as much as possible.

They were determined, however, to avoid the mess and effort required to get firewood into the house.

So when they built their house, they included a dumbwaiter that brings wood right to the fireplace in their living room.

They got a surprise when they contacted manufacturers. "The cost was going to be anywhere from \$10,000 to \$100,000," Sherwood says. After considering what was needed to make what they wanted, Beatty figured he could build it himself for a lot less.

Their house plans included the rough opening needed for the dumbwaiter. The upper end of the dumbwaiter shaft runs into built-in cabinets that also serve as an entertainment center. "There are two doors at the base of the entertainment center," Elizabeth explains. "On the left is the dumbwaiter, and on the right is wood storage." The stove sits to the right of the wood storage cabinet.

After the contractor provided the rough opening for the shaft, Beatty put 4 by 4's in all four corners of the opening to support a track for the little elevator. Then he had a fabricator build a heavy-gauge aluminum box that measures 24 in. wide by 20 in. deep by 20 in. high. On each of the eight corners of this cube, they attached two caster wheels in such a way that they straddle the corners of the 4 by 4 track.

The casters fit fairly tight, so the box rolls up and down the track without swinging or wobbling.

The main feature of the Beattys' dumbwaiter is that it's raised and lowered with a screw-drive garage door opener. "We used a 1/2 hp Genie opener," Sherwood says. "The motor mounts on a platform below the box in the basement and the jackscrew runs up the back of the elevator shaft."

Beatty bought a second Genie carriage mechanism and attached it and the one that came with the opener to the back of the box - one centered on top and the other centered at the bottom - so the single jackscrew runs through both. He says this spreads the lift load and should add to the life of the carriage mechanisms.

To provide counterbalance for the dumbwaiter, Beatty attached a couple of 10-lb. window sash weights to the upper rear corners of the dumbwaiter box with nylon ropes over pulleys at the top of the elevator shaft.

To make operating the dumbwaiter as safe as possible, Beatty ran the wiring for the control through a doorbell switch placed so the cabinet door in the living rooms must be closed to depress the button before the elevator can be operated. "I looked at micro switches to put on the door, but the doorbell switch actually is better suited for this because it requires no over-travel adjustment - and it cost a lot less," he says.

He also installed a lever-type safety catch on the inside of the door. "When the dumbwaiter rack is up, it raises the lever that releases the safety catch," he says. "That way, the door can only be opened if the dumbwaiter is up."

Beatty uses another push button doorbell switch in the basement to control the



Dumbwaiter delivers wood to built-in cabinets that also serve as entertainment center.

dumbwaiter. "A remote control would be totally inappropriate for this," he says.

The Beattys store firewood just outside the basement door. To get wood to the stove, they carry it the short distance into the basement, load 30 to 40 lbs. on the dumbwaiter, and raise it up to the living room. Once the dumbwaiter is raised, they open the cabinet door and transfer the wood into the adjoining storage cabinet.

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Box rides on caster wheels which roll up and down a "track" made from 4 by 4's. Dumbwaiter is raised and lowered by a screw-drive garage door opener.



"Dump Box" Method Makes Concrete More Competitive

Oregon contractor Marty Richter lays concrete driveways and walkways without forms and without the hassles normally associated with concrete. He says the methods he has developed make concrete competitive with asphalt.

"We can pour 300 yards, 5 inches deep and 11 feet wide, in about 5 to 6 hours with just two guys," says Richter.

Richter's secret is a concrete version of the kind of "box" asphalt companies use to spread their hot mix. He developed the unit at the suggestion of Scott Erickson, Quality Concrete, Salem, Oregon. Erickson had about given up competing with asphalt companies on bids for driveways.

"I always wondered why we couldn't handle concrete the same way they handle asphalt. When I mentioned that to Marty, he figured out how to do it," says Erickson.

Richter's concrete box lays strips from 5 to 15 feet wide. Removable sleeves in the box allow him to increase depth from 4 to 8 in. in 1/2-in. increments. The sled forms 1/2-in. grooves every 4 in. on center, and Richter

cuts joints in the concrete every 12 feet, like a city sidewalk. Richter also adds a fiber mesh to the concrete during mixing for added strength.

"Asphalt sleds float over loose ground," explains Richter. "I prefer to pour on hard ground, so I built the box to slide on skids. We put down compacted rock and then skid over it."

Last fall, Richter paved nearly three miles of walkways for a Tillamook, Oregon dairyman who practices intensive grazing. The dairyman did it to reduce mud on the cow's bags, reduce hoof problems and eliminate muddy paths to and from the parlor. The concrete pathways accomplished all that and more.

"He also saved more than 1 1/2 hours each day bringing in the cows," adds Richter. "He has since added property and wants more pathways laid."

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Oregon contractor Marty Richter lays concrete driveways and field walkways using a concrete version of the kind of "box" asphalt companies use.



Concrete box lays strips from 5 to 15 ft. wide with 1/2-in. grooves every 4 in.

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