

November 15--the first day of deer season here in Michigan. But, we remember the date for another reason. On November 15th, 1975, we moved into our cabin. We have lived here now for forty years.

The farm house where I grew up has been empty since 2000, although we sometimes have guests there, and my rug loom and some other items take up space. Many times over the past fifteen years, we have heard the question: "Why don't you move into the house?" Our answer is another question. "Why?"

The implication is that living in a small, one room cabin is okay on a temporary basis, but it is a condition that should be corrected when the opportunity arises. We don't see it that way.

Others are coming around to this idea now, too. The "small house movement" and the "tiny house revolution" are beginning to have some adherents in our exceedingly self-indulgent society. There are more people now who are beginning to ask themselves how much they really need and how much is "too much."

We have never wanted more than this little cabin. We have 640 square feet of space in our house plus a nice, dry basement of 480 square feet.

Any more would be too much for us. In this little house, we have room for all the clothing we need, all the food to carry us through the winter, shelves for hundreds of books, and room for my small loom. We have a good kitchen, plus a woodburning cookstove we use during the cold season.

Our cedar walled cabin is nice and light. There are windows on all sides, and the old round oak table from the farm house is placed in front of the east windows. Here, we have our view of the world of this farm. In the swamp east of the house, we watch birds and wildlife all year round. The field guides to birds and the binoculars are handy on that east windowsill. And yet, because we do have only one room, we can turn in our chairs and look to the west--where the old maple tree stands as a sentinel, and the hay fields and pasture predominate. We can turn our heads a bit and look north to the Speicher hill. We are liable to see the Norwegian fjord horses there, grazing, and farther up, perhaps the

cattle, if they happen to be confined to that particular pasture. We do have to get up and move to the southwest corner of the cabin to look out the south window, though. The silver maple my great-grandfather Lars Augustineson planted in the late 1890s takes up most of the view there, but the north side of the barn is visible from that window.

The way our cabin is situated on a little knoll--the site of the log cabin where my siblings and I were born--we have perfect views of both sunrise and sunset year round. We appreciate that.

Someone once said to me, "You and Runo can't get very angry with each other, or you would have to have a bigger house. There's no place to go to get away from each other!" We have never felt that need.

Our basement is well-used space, too. It is not a "finished" basement in the sense that the phrase is used today, but it is very much a maximally utilized area. Our freezer is there, our shower, too, and a small fruit cellar has shelves for the home canned goods that will see us through the winter. A 8X8 foot root cellar opens from the basement. The potatoes and onions keep all winter in that cool, damp room.

There are lines for drying clothes in the basement, too. During the winter, I hang the laundry in the warm basement, and it dries quickly while it adds a little moisture to the arid winter atmosphere. The stove that heats the house is in one corner of the basement, and we have a small sauna, as well. Another nook holds my wool carding equipment, and there are nails (not brass hooks) in many of the overhead joists where we hang our barn clothes.

So, this cabin of ours is not a fancy place. But, it is, we think, a pretty place, both in itself and in its location. It is a comfortable home that welcomes us back every time we return, whether it is from doing our barn chores or walking down the long lane to the road to the mailbox, and even more so if we have been gone away from the farm. We come in through the door, and the cats stretch, the border collie greets us, and the whole house smiles. We are all at home again.