



Photo by Mike Macozok

Many of us can remember when that one little stretch of Main Street from Hotel McCall to Paul's Market and the three or four blocks south of it were all that constituted the town of McCall. Icons like The Pancake House and Shore Lodge were considered out of town. But times, and a booming real estate market, have a way of changing things. Yet for all that, McCall is still a small town, and always will be if most locals have their way. Downtown is still downtown, despite all the new developments that have sprung up around the stop light clear out by the airport. So when a little of that small-town history combines with an Old World concept for living and working in today's downtown environment, it just seems to fit right in.

Say hello to Roosevelt Place.



Photo by Alex Sault



Photo by Patrick Burt



Photo by Patrick Bivert

Two blocks up from where the old mill once operated, the railroad ran east out of downtown past a bulk diesel fuel plant and the station house. Those buildings are history now, just like the old mill, but when Mike Maciaszek bought the property a few years back, his respect for the past inspired a vision for the future of McCall. City planners have deemed "mixed use" as the best concept for downtown, but while projects like Alpine Village are developing that idea on a grand scale, Maciaszek has taken a more personal approach.

"Stand-alone buildings with a shop downstairs and the owner living above have been all over Europe for centuries," he says, "just like the old Western towns in this country. That's what we're going for here."

Completed in May, Roosevelt Place is a decidedly upscale model of that historic concept. With an art gallery on the ground floor and two floors (3,500 square feet) of living space stacked above like layers in an ice cream sundae, each with its own flavor, Roosevelt Place has quickly evolved from a conversation piece to a gathering place.

"On the average day there are people downstairs in the gallery, people on the sidewalk, people sitting outside

talking," beams Maciaszek, "all because of this little building on the edge of the central business district. You don't have that anywhere else in McCall."

The ground floor Three Forks Gallery space is leased to Bob and Linda Youde. In addition to featuring the exquisite hand-carved birds of McCall artist Dave Alexander, along with an eclectic mix of local and regional artists, the couple traveled to France last year and brought back a number of European pieces to introduce to the local market.

"We like Western, Southwestern, outdoor and wildlife art," says Linda. "That's the core of our collection and the basic philosophy of our gallery. But it also has to be art we both like. So when we fell in love with some of the ceramic and glass work in Europe we asked each other only one question: 'Do you think this will sell in McCall?' The answer was yes."

According to Maciaszek, "When Bob approached me about leasing the commercial part of the building, he had been looking for the right kind of space and the right kind of location in McCall for a couple of years but had not found what he wanted. People said [of this property], 'But it's not on Main Street.' Bob wasn't looking for the kind of



THREE FORKS GALLERY
1308 Roosevelt

"We like Western, Southwestern, outdoor and wildlife art," says Linda. "That's the core of our collection and the basic philosophy of our gallery. But it also has to be art we both like. So when we fell in love with some of the ceramic and glass work in Europe we asked each other only one question: 'Do you think this will sell in McCall?' The answer was yes."

of daily people-getting-ice cream-and-walking-in-to-look-around traffic, he was looking for people who specifically wanted to go to an art gallery."

"By joining the project early," says Bob, "we were able to work all the requirements we wanted in the gallery: eastern exposure, 16-foot ceilings, high windows on the east and north side for that great morning light right into the design."

Youde is also chairman of the McCall Planning & Zoning Commission, and with his unique perspective on McCall, Maciaszek's idea appealed to him as an exciting concept for the future of downtown.

"When I saw Mike's early design ideas," says Bob, "I said, 'he gets it.' He understands the concept of mixed use in a small town."

The building design was a team effort by Maciaszek and Jevon Truex of Network Architects and speaks to its colonial style, yet there are modern amenities as well, like an alarm system, smoke and heat detectors, even a low temperature sensor on the ground floor that will call the alarm company if there's a risk the pipes are freezing or the heat goes off. Inside the front door, a polished wood staircase leads upstairs. Down a short hallway, the garage entrance in the back of the building opens to a beautiful, wood-paneled elevator, making it easier to lug groceries, shopping bags or luggage up to the living quarters, not to mention making the whole place completely accessible.

The second floor has a guest master suite with a private balcony looking toward the lake, another bedroom with its own private balcony, and one more bedroom and bath, as well as a laundry room. The primary living space is on the third floor. Both the stairs and the elevator deposit you into a wide-open living/dining/kitchen area that occupies fully half of the entire floor. Exposed window frames and custom, hand-turned molding emphasize the crisp, clean lines builder Fernand Geneau of Payette Builders created, again working in tandem with Maciaszek.

"This is the way a lot of old trim was done," Maciaszek explains. "You don't see it nowadays, and in

fact you can't buy this stuff any more. We did it ourselves, and we did it for less by buying all the different dimension wood stock and cutting all the crown, chair rails, and everything else with the router table and the plane."

The polished, random-plank wood floors bring ooh's and ahh's from virtually every visitor, according to Maciaszek. The floors are made from northern Idaho Douglas Fir, milled at Idaho Forest Products in Horseshoe Bend and cost less than comparable, high-end engineered flooring. Opposite the fireplace it's propane, another nod to the modern. The dining area is surrounded on two walls by windows with stunning views of the lake and mountains, and flanked by a modern, open kitchen with custom, flush cabinetry, another historic touch.

Down the hall to the other half of the third level you'll find a powder room, a library/den/office, and the



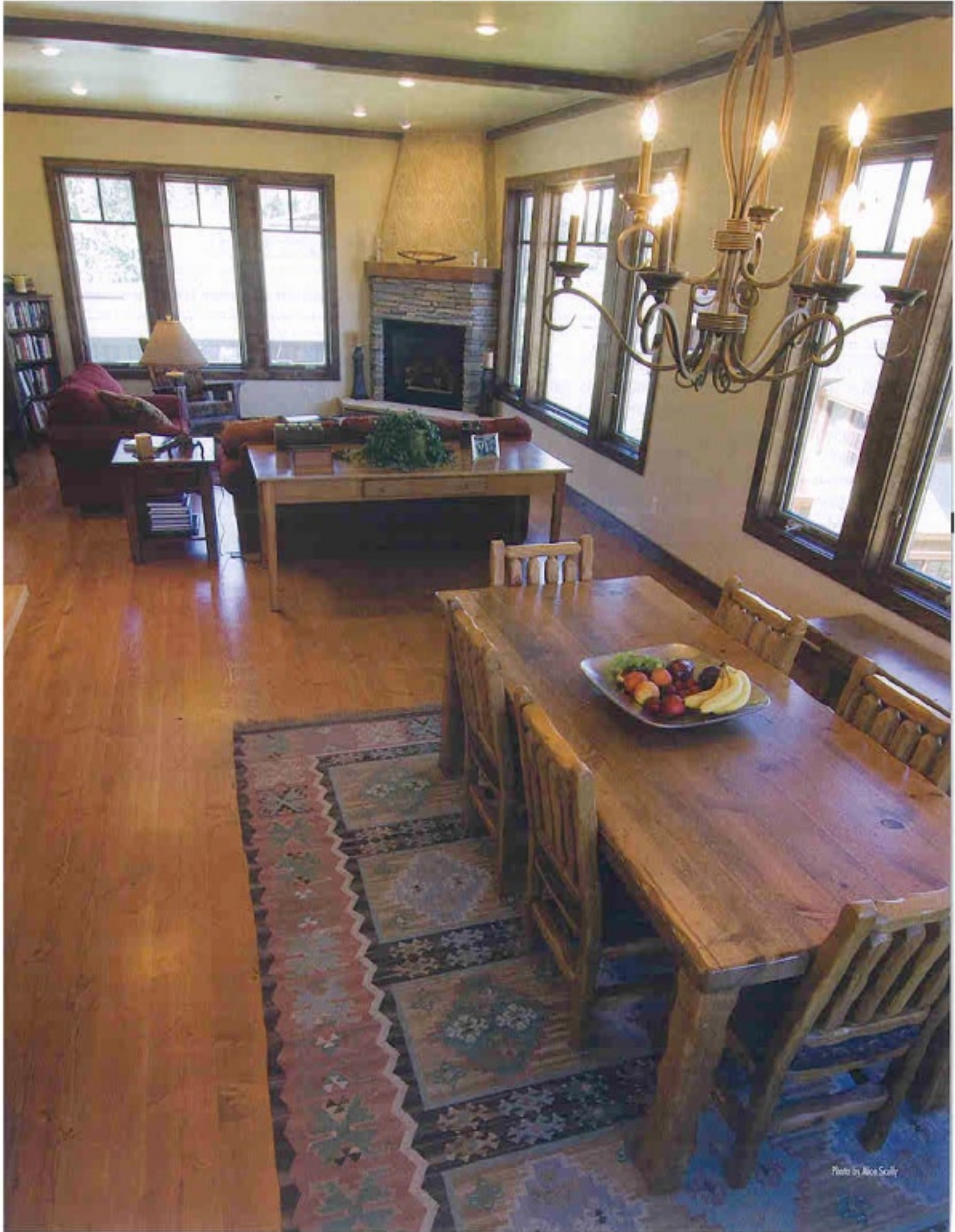


Photo by Alice Scully



master suite, all of which retain the colonial style with hand-turned moldings and crisp lines that make you feel as though you had just stepped back in time, into a new home a hundred years ago.

"There are a thousand different decisions that go into a place like this," Maciaszek says, "and one of the things we did to help simplify the process was ask ourselves what they would have done a century ago."

The cherry on top of this triple-layer sundae lies up another short stairway to the spectacular, 1,400-square-foot rooftop deck of preserved Brazilian walnut four times harder than teak, and more water and rot resistant to boot. Naturally there's a hot tub, and an outdoor kitchen, and a garden, to complete this incredible outdoor paradise, 35 feet above the street, with incomparable 360-degree views of downtown McCall, the lake, and the mountains all the way to Brundage.

"I ride my bike to work," beams Maciaszek. "If we want to go out to dinner we ride our bikes or walk into town, we walk two blocks to our boat at the brand new Mile High Marina. We don't get in our car much. And then here you are looking out at the water from the hot tub, but you're private, and you're somewhat protected."

Pinch me, I must be dreaming.

From day one the project was a public/private partnership. The city liked the concept enough to help with some significant infrastructure that not only got the project built, but improved the entire neighborhood as well. First there was the old two-inch water line not adequate for the new building. So the Urban Renewal District put in an eight-inch line, allowing Roosevelt Place to move forward and opening the way for other projects to be developed, or re-developed. The old, beat-up road was

replaced with new pavement, including a bike lane that wasn't there before. And thanks to utility franchise fees, the old aboveground phone lines that ran down one side of the street were put underground. Maciaszek sprang for the sidewalk, curb and gutter as part of his agreement with the city, and put in two paved parking spaces between the sidewalk and the street.

"The city was a partner all the way," grins Maciaszek, "and I mean from the planning department to the people in the roads department. I'm a changed person because of this. We weren't asking for anything special. We were clearly not trying to put in the highest density to make the most money. But the city and the people involved value the same kind of viable downtown as someone who lives here full-time, raising a family."

As you can imagine, Roosevelt place has other commercial property owners in McCall talking. Guests at events Maciaszek has held invariably end up talking about other creative projects that could be done downtown. What about a bed and breakfast or a luxury vacation rental over a commercial shop, or a rooftop restaurant with the living quarters below?

"There are just so many ways to go with a project like this," Maciaszek enthuses. "My building is 20 percent commercial and 80 percent residential, but that's completely flexible. And that idea alone opens up even more possibilities. You've got to look down the road. How do we really want McCall to take shape over time?"

The true beauty of an ice cream sundae is that there are lots of ways to build a perfect one; it all depends on combining the right flavors. And so it is with building a downtown that reflects the values of the people who live there. In the end, it all comes down to respect and perspective, balancing the past with the future. 