

## River Shelter

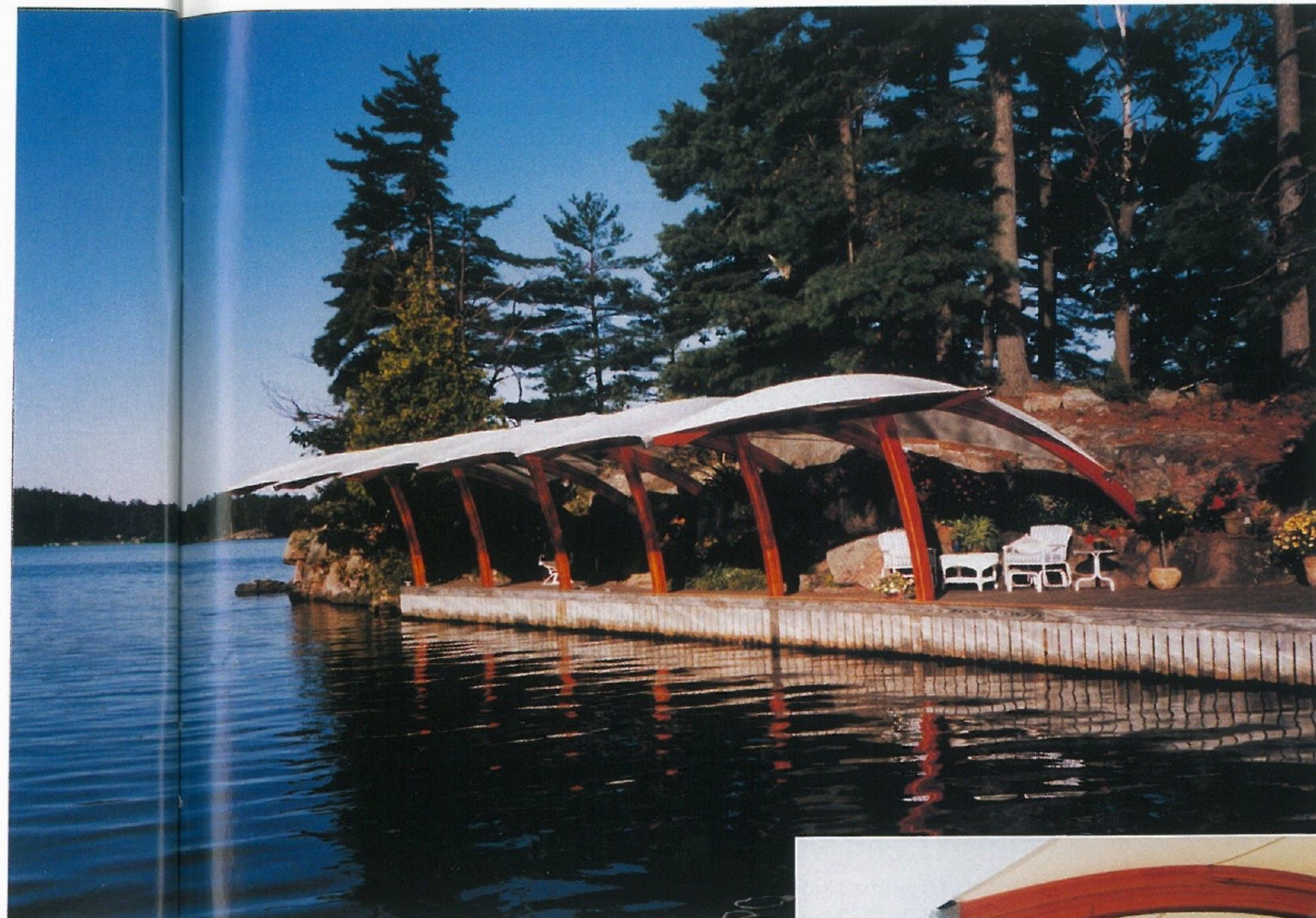
### An architect-builder crafts a fabric-covered boat dock on the St. Lawrence Seaway.

With a master boat builder's attention to detail, Steve Taylor, a master home builder in his own right, created a hybrid wood and fabric boat dock canopy for his Pine Island estate on the St. Lawrence Seaway in upstate New York. The delicate structure recalls the forms and construction techniques that have evolved over centuries of wooden boat building.

Taylor's canopy suggests both boat ribs (through a series of gently curving, laminated wood beams) and sails, with off-white, vinyl-coated polyester fabric stretched over the beams. Six wooden "glue-lam" beams—looking like upside down boat keels—cantilever out over the water from six curved, laminated wood posts that are evenly spaced along the dock. The beams, held in place by large wooden flanges and a single cross brace that runs the entire length of the dock, are anchored back to large rock outcroppings behind. The effect is somewhat reminiscent of the Arts & Crafts-style work of the turn-of-the-century California architects Greene & Greene.

Fabric is stretched across this simple latticework to cover the dock and cantilevered 12 ft. (3.6 m) over the water in front of the dock. At first, Taylor considered using rigid roofing, but the opaqueness and weight of the materials seemed heavy and unnatural. "The columns (in the first proposal) looked as though they would bend and cause the whole structure to collapse into the water. As soon as we struck upon the idea of using fabric, it all came together," says Taylor. "It was light, translucent, delicate and balanced." At night, the canopy glows from several uplights mounted on the back side of the cross brace.

The fabric portion of the canopy was designed by Elizabeth Murrell, Fabric Structures Inc., Township of Washington, N.J., who received an Award of Excellence last year from the Industrial Fabrics Association International. Fabrication of the wooden elements was by Steve Taylor-Builder, Thousand Isle Park, N.Y. ■ —BNW



PHOTOS COURTESY, STEVE TAYLOR-BUILDER

#### Project data

**Client:** Taylor family

**Architect:** Steve Taylor, Steve Taylor-Builder Inc., Thousand Island Park, N.Y.

**Engineer:** Wayne Rendeley, FTL Happold, New York, N.Y.

**Canopy design:** Elizabeth Murrell, Fabric Structures Inc., Township of Washington, N.J.

**Canopy fabrication:** The Fabric Shop, Monmouth, Maine

**Fabric:** Fluotop S, Precontraint 1002, Ferrari S.A., La Tour du Pin, France

Steve Taylor's boat dock canopy suggests boat ribs and sails with gently curving wood beams and off-white stretched fabric (at left). The beams, held in place by large flanges and a cross brace, produce an effect reminiscent of the Arts & Crafts-style work of the turn-of-the-century architects Greene & Greene (below).