



The Trussells built an addition to their home around a 130 year old log cabin.

Photos courtesy This Week News



Robert and Connie Trussell by their solar heated "home within a home".

## Solar Home Boasts "Built-In" Log Cabin

By Judy Strachan

NEW MARKET, MINN. — A log cabin inside a solar heated home sounded interesting enough to merit investigation.

Robert and Connie Trussell grew tired of the "plastic trim new homes" of various previous residences in Philadelphia and Los Angeles. They decided they wanted "an old, basic farm house made of wood and iron." The house they purchased is south of New Market on what was the Pete Eischens' farm. "It was advertised as having an original log cabin as part of the house," said Connie.

The Trussells bought the old farmhouse, built in 1901, and 90 acres of the farm. The log cabin, the Trussells explained, is about 130 years old and had been used as a house, then was moved off the site for use as a smoke house, and finally brought back as an additional room in the present structure.

Trussell, who operates a hog farming operation on the farm, has constructed solar panels on the south wall of the room they built around the log cabin portion of the house. Mrs.

Trussell said that after renovating and restoring the log cabin they enjoyed the rustic comfort of that area but it was too cold to use in the winter. Since they needed room for a larger kitchen anyway, they built a structural addition to the house enclosing the log cabin.

In effect, the log cabin now "floats as an independent room inside a room." By design, Connie now has a larger kitchen on the north and west sides of the log cabin and a garden room on the south side. The south wall is Robert's solar heating project.

Trussell installed 450 square feet of solar panels with active collectors to control the heat. He said he tested various absorber plates and decided to use mostly his own design.

Last year the Trussells spent \$600 at last year's prices to heat their home. They hope to save, at this year's prices, about \$500.

The solar heated house with a 12'x14' log cabin inside is certainly a conversation piece, and as Connie said, "It certainly is different." Reprinted with permission from This Week News, published by the Dakota County Tribune, Farmington, Minn.

### "PIANOCORDER" CASSETTE ATTACHMENT

## Turn Your Piano Into A "Player"

"It's like having a concert performed live in your own home," says Donald Barton, sales representative for Pianocorder, a new kit that converts any piano to a computer-controlled, cassette-playing "player piano" that you can still play as a regular piano.

"The system was first introduced about three years ago but was shelved because of problems. Superscope bought the rights to it and spent more time developing it. Now, we have a system that's ready to go," Barton told FARM SHOW.

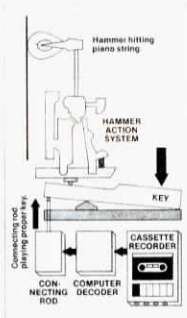
Here's how it works:

You drop a computer-programmed tape into the special cassette recorder mounted right on the piano. Information on the tape is transferred to a solid state computer decoder. It, in turn, relays signals to a series of solenoids that control a series of connecting rods just below the piano keys in the base of the instrument. The rods move upward, actually striking the back of the keys with the same action that would result from striking keys on the keyboard, and an identical sound results. Similar rods control the piano's pedals.

"It doesn't affect operation of your piano in any way," explains Barton. "It's just a way to get more use out of it and hear some of the greatest musicians playing your favorite music."

"When you play a tape, the com-

puter tells the rods how soft or how hard the keys should be played, and how slow or how fast. And, it tells them how long to hold the keys," Barton points out.



You can also record yourself playing the piano. Just reverse the Pianocorder system to detect your own touch and interpretation on the keys.

At present, more than 300 tapes containing some 3000 selections, ranging from classical to popular to jazz, are available.

The Pianocorder kit can be installed on any piano — old or new, upright or grand — so long as it's in good working order. Skilled technicians do the installation. No on-going maintenance is required, although



Plop in a cassette and piano keys actually play the tune — with help from a computer.

you may have to tune your piano more often because, with the kit, it will be played more often.

System cost, installed, is around \$1,800.

For more information, and the

name of the nearest dealer, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Donald Barton, R. J. Leonard & Sons, 1304 East 24th St., Minneapolis, Minn. 55404 (ph 612 729-0090, or 729-1745).