

# **matt bachardy building design**

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## **CLIFF HOUSE, near San Marcos, Texas**

This project's program started out simple enough. The owners wanted a "hunting cabin" getaway along the banks of the Blanco River on their ranch north of San Marcos, Texas. The owners are avid bird hunters and built a world-class trap and skeet shooting practice range along the lowland banks of the river that runs through their ranch.

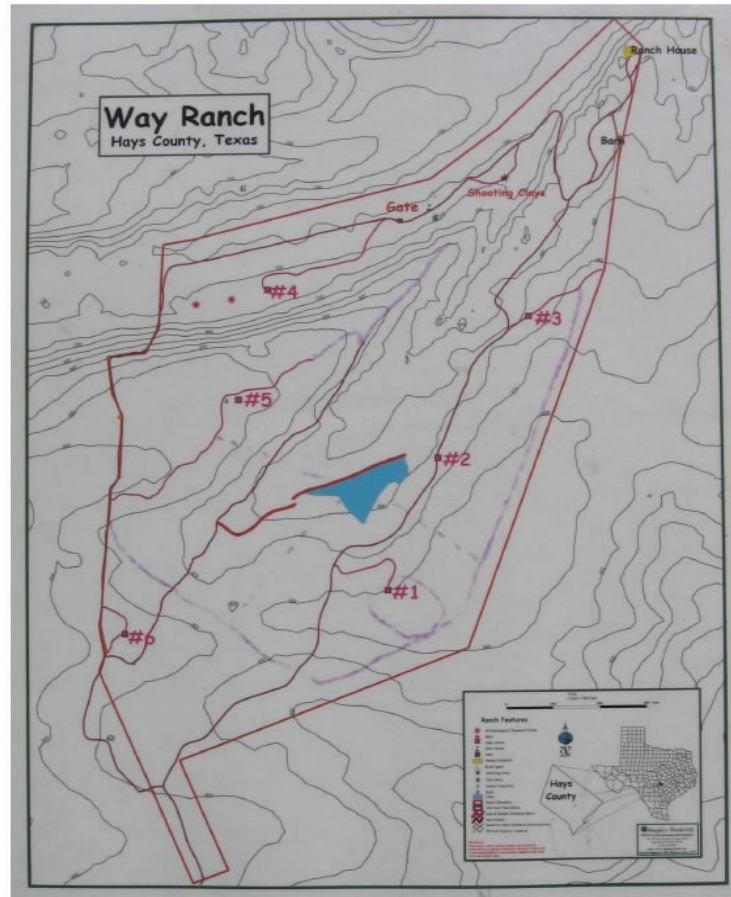
The site they picked for the "cabin" was something altogether different. It is perched right at the edge of a 70' high rocky cliff with dramatic views of the river below and hills beyond. And by the way, they wanted to be able to see the cliff up and downstream from their deck. Since the cliff had quite a bit of undercut from eons of river erosion at its base, we could not build as close to the edge as the owner wanted. Therefore, the solution was to build a cantilevered concrete and steel, bridge-like deck that would extend far enough out beyond the edge of the cliff to take in the desired view, without building the foundation beyond the undercut profile of the rock cliff – just in case the cliff face ever shears off from weathering, the house won't go with it.

Since the owners live in Houston, the house needed to be a comfortable, rustic retreat from hectic city life. It is designed to ventilate itself, featuring a cupola in the center with operable windows up high that induce a thermal chimney effect, drawing cooling breezes throughout naturally. There is also a construction-type elevator that one can take from the deck to the river below for swimming in the cool, clear water on those hot summer days – without having to get in the truck and drive down through the switch-back road that leads to the river below. This project was a true design and engineering challenge.



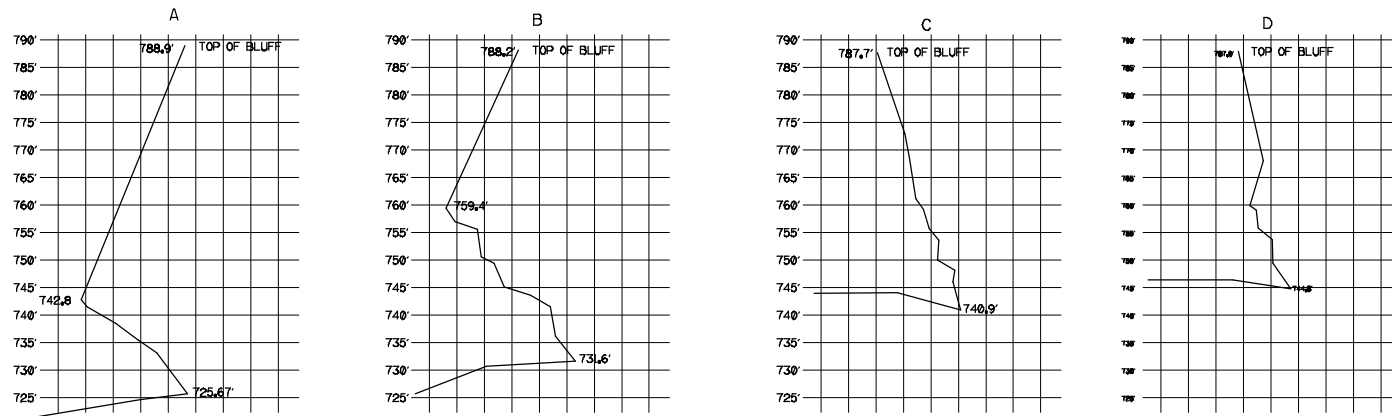
Aerial View During Construction – from the west

Map of the Ranch



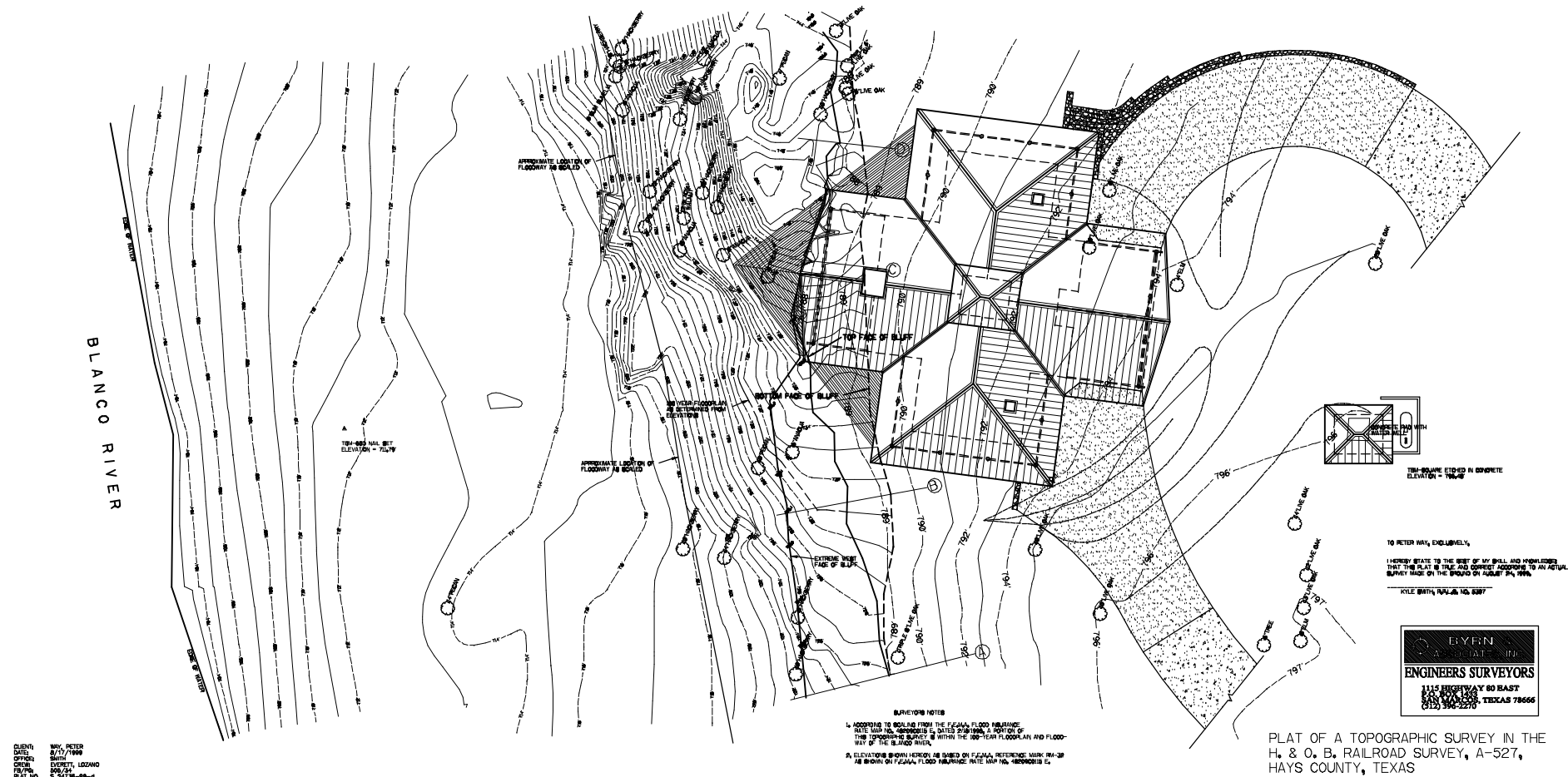
Approach view from the South-West





## Bluff Profiles

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



PLAT OF A TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY IN THE  
H. & O. B. RAILROAD SURVEY, A-527,  
HAYS COUNTY, TEXAS



## Master Site Plan

SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"

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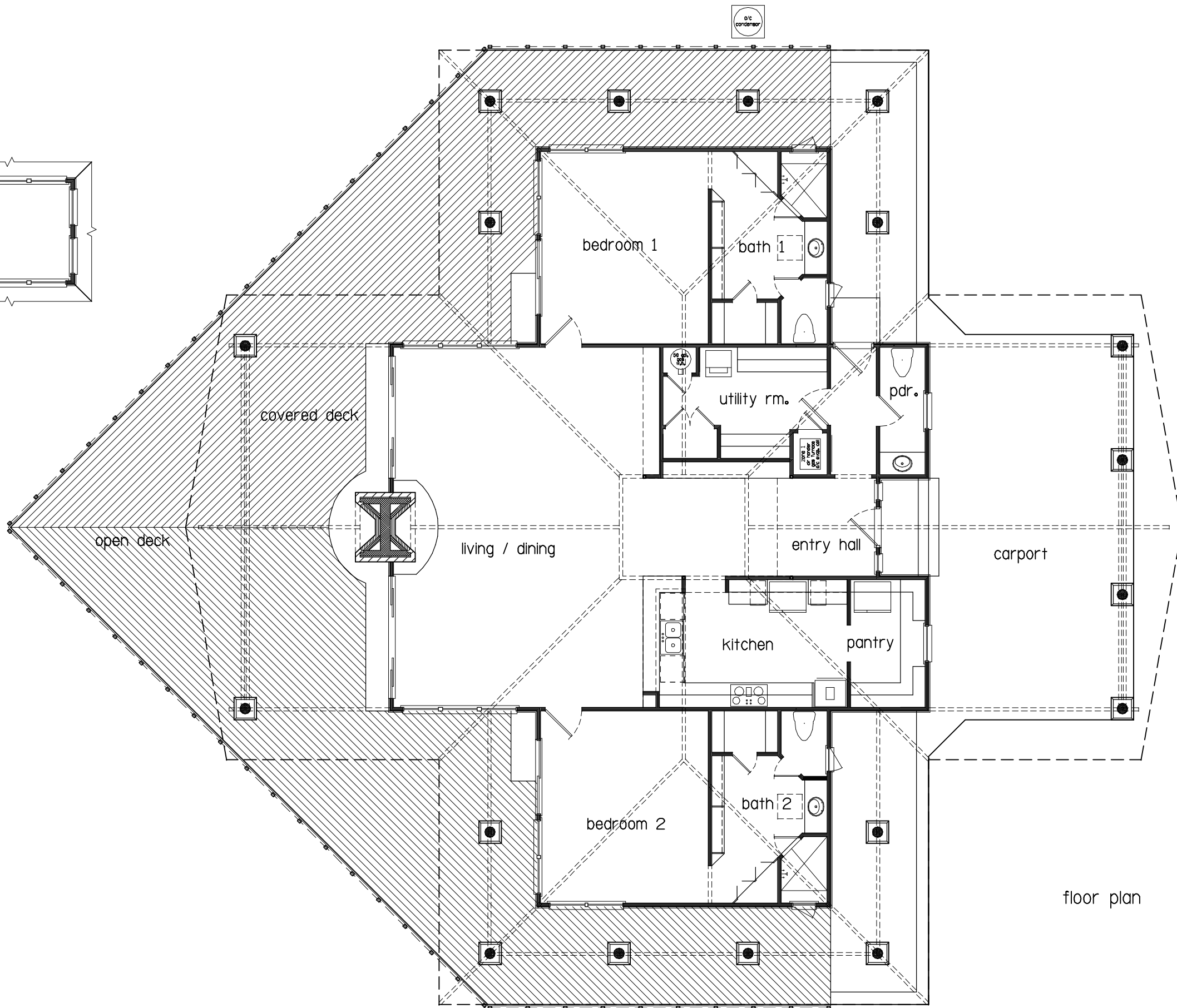
a ranch residence for  
**Peter & Mary Faye Way**

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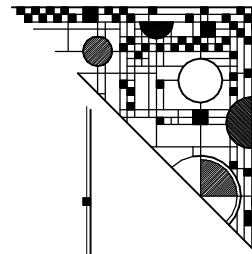
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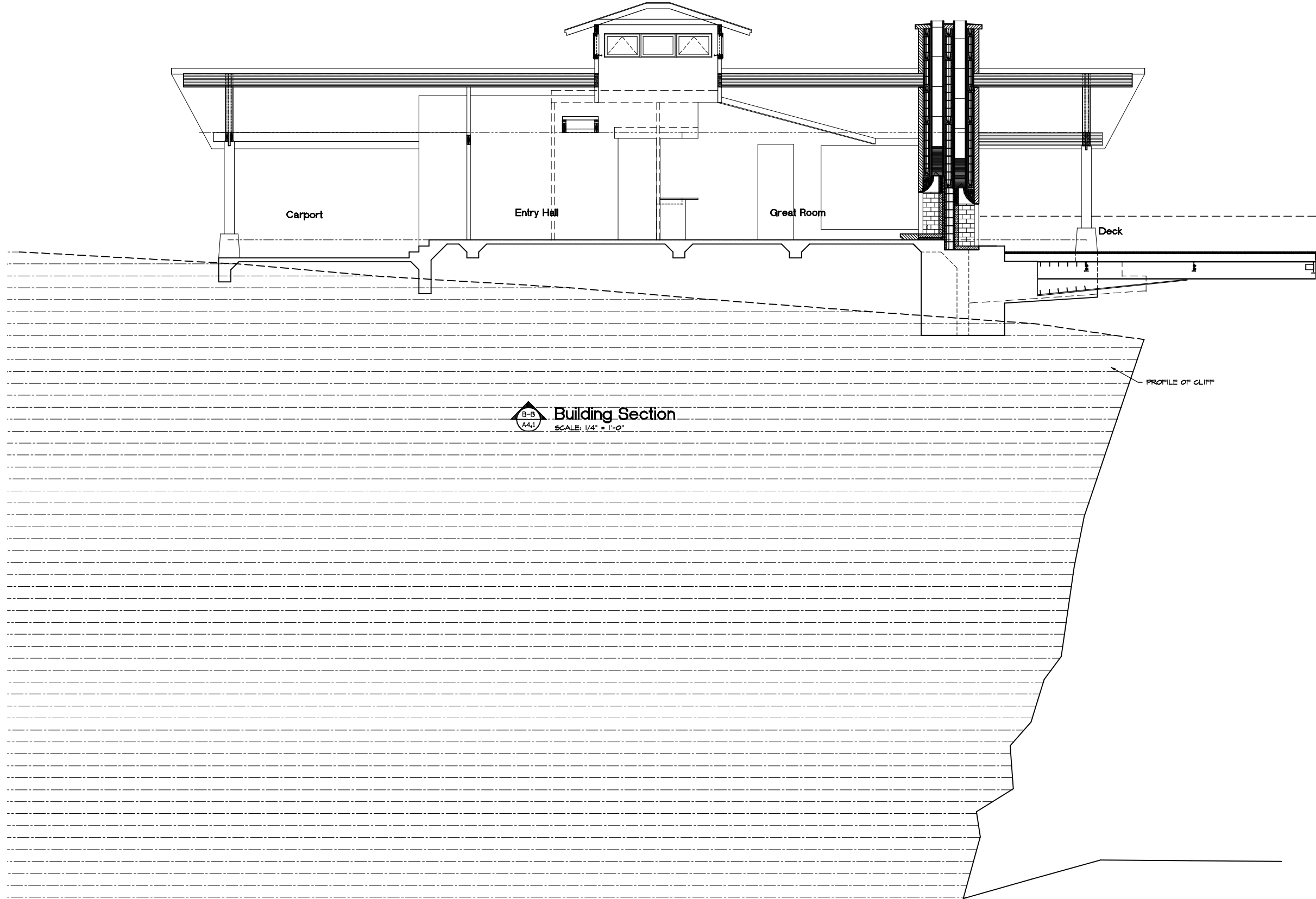
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**B-B**  
**A4.1**  
**Building Section**  
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

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a ranch residence for  
**Peter & Mary Faye Way**  
hays county, texas

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Deck approach on the west side



West Deck View



Deck looking South-West



Deck Rumford Fireplace



Deck looking South-East



View to the West from the Deck  
The handrail and cliff face are visible in the lower left corner of this shot



East Deck with elevator visible in lower right corner



Views to the East from the deck.

The pictures barely convey the 70' + drop as well as actually being there looking down.

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View from the elevator platform looking west, under the point of the deck.



Views from the river below





More views from below



- Ramp leading up to elevator landing



looking straight up from elevator landing



Carport looking West



Carport looking East



Main Entrance from Carport



East Entrance to Utility Hallway



View from front door





View from the kitchen sink



View toward kitchen from living room



Kitchen view from bar





Views toward entry hall



Western Bedroom

The furniture was custom made from cedar harvested from the ranch



View from the Western Bedroom



## CONSTRUCTION PHOTOS



View from the east



View from the West



View from the West



Deck construction details



The main deck beam is cantilevered 26' from the foundation, and was cast in place into a cantilevered concrete beam. Cantilevered concrete beams also support the sides and columns supporting the roof.

