

*Backyard Renovation Transforms Hillside*



Photo by Alex Patho

Rosetta Outcropping Walls, Steps and Waterfall Gives Family  
a New Way to Enjoy the Outdoors

**PROJECT:** Johnson Residence

**CUSTOMER:** Glenn and Carole Johnson

**LOCATION:** Westmoreland County, PA

**MANUFACTURER:** RI Lampus Company

**DESIGNER:** Tim Davis, owner of Country Farms Garden Center and Landscape Design

**INSTALLER:** Country Farms Garden Center and Landscape Design

**YEAR:** 2010

The hillside behind Glenn and Carole Johnson's home was long overdue for a renovation; the wooden steps were deteriorating and to make matters worse, a tree had fallen across the slope. All the shrubbery was dying and the Johnsons knew it was time for a change.

"We knew we had to do something, and we wanted it to be a little unique," Glenn explained. The Johnson's yard was on two levels. From the back of the house, the lower level of the yard extended about 30 feet, then sloped steeply up to ½ acre on the upper level. The goal of their project was to provide access to the upper part of the yard in an aesthetic way.

So the Johnsons contacted Country Farms, whom they've worked with for over 20 years on various landscaping projects. Tim Davis of Country Farms showed the Johnsons several brochures of hardscape options including a dry cast system and natural boulders.

*( continued on reverse )*



**BEFORE**



But for the Johnsons, the choice was clear. “I just fell in love with the Rosetta stone,” Carole said. “It was so natural looking and we knew we wanted to add a waterfall next to the staircase. Our plans kept getting more elaborate, but we said, ‘You know what? We plan on staying here the rest of our lives. Let’s do it!’”

Rosetta accurately captures the look and feel of nature in its richly textured blocks. Each Rosetta block is cast in molds taken from actual, weathered stone. Using wet-cast concrete to create Rosetta gives the blocks an incredibly natural look that is engineered, consistent and durable.

The Johnsons chose the Rosetta Outcropping Collection for their yard. Outcropping features large, structural blocks in 12 unique sizes and 24 unique stone textures, giving finished walls a random look. Rosetta Irregular Steps created the staircase, and Rosetta Dimensional Steps created the landings. The steps feature the rugged look of natural stone, but with uniform rise—making a safe, consistent stairway.

The focal point of the project’s design included a water accent. “A major part of the homeowner’s wish list was incorporating a waterfall into the design,” Davis said. The varied shapes and sizes of the Outcropping units allowed for a naturally random flowing pattern cascading down the hillside.

Davis designed the entire project, which included approximately 600 sq. ft. of Rosetta Outcropping walls, plus 27 Rosetta Irregular Steps for the staircase and 8 Dimensional Steps for the landings. Since the entire hillside was rock and shale, no reinforcement was necessary.

“It was quite a challenge to get the machinery in to install the walls and steps. Plus we have a gazebo back there, which made the space even tighter,” Carole said.

“The engineered interlocking units made the installation process easier, allowing for installation efficiency,” Davis said. Each Rosetta Outcropping block has a shear heel that rests behind the block below it, creating a solid, structural wall. To begin the installation, Country Farms’ crew first removed the existing wall and staircase, then excavated and installed a gravel leveling pad before installing blocks. The walls were backfilled with gravel, except for the top 12 in. which was backfilled with topsoil. The final touch was installing the water feature and landscaping. In total, the project took approximately 15 working days to complete.

“We’re extremely pleased with how everything turned out. In fact, my kitchen window overlooks the yard, and it makes having to stand at the kitchen sink to do dishes a lot more fun,” Carole said. “We notice that our landscaping inspired others in our neighborhood to spruce up their landscaping. It really was worth living in a ‘dust bowl’ for awhile.”

To finish off the project, the Johnsons are considering placing a statue of “Jack and Jill” at the top of the hill for a whimsical touch.

In addition to the Outcropping and Step Collections, Rosetta’s product lines include Belvedere and Dimensional Wall—smaller, garden wall products with distinctly natural texture and appearance. The Rosetta Grand Flagstone and Dimensional Flagstone Collection are slab products perfect for creating walkways, patios and more.

Start designing your next Rosetta project today! Visit [www.DiscoverRosetta.com](http://www.DiscoverRosetta.com) for design resources, project inspiration and to find your local Rosetta manufacturer.

**AFTER**



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