

The home is nestled into a hillside, using the topography of the land. The driveway gently sweeps up to the south-facing and protected front entrance.

ESSENTIAL GEORGIAN BAY

THIS LOCAL BUILDER OFFERS EIGHT QUINTESSENTIALS TO NEW HOME CONSTRUCTION IN SOUTHERN GEORGIAN BAY.

STORY **LAUREL FORTIN** | PHOTOGRAPHY **SANDY MACKAY**

The owners of this modern new home knew that they were building it arguably at the epicentre of winter's microclimate in Southern Georgian Bay. Measured by the depths of its snowfall and the horizontality of its gales, the summit at Banks, east of Ravenna, is ground zero for moisture that has been drawn by the north wind out of the open waters of Georgian Bay. The home has enviable front row seats to this seasonal phenomenon.

Its location was just one of the reasons that builder **Jason McLean** of **McLean Contracting** was excited to work on this project with the homeowners. Jason and his team completed the home last year, and the seasoned builder of 14 years says it represents some of the quintessentials of custom homes in the area.

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1 LOCATION

While this particular home has an escarpment location, there is no shortage of lakes, rivers, valleys, mountains, ravines, rock outcroppings, rolling hills, farms, bush lots or even endearing towns in the region to create a home upon, says Jason. "I generally like to have at least one 'view' property in my pocket that is waiting for me to put a house up on it, so I keep my eye on the market." Waterfront properties are now rare commodities, but they do come up on the market for patient buyers who know the terrain and are able to make decisions quickly.

The lower level gives the family access at ground level to enjoy the acreage surrounding the home.

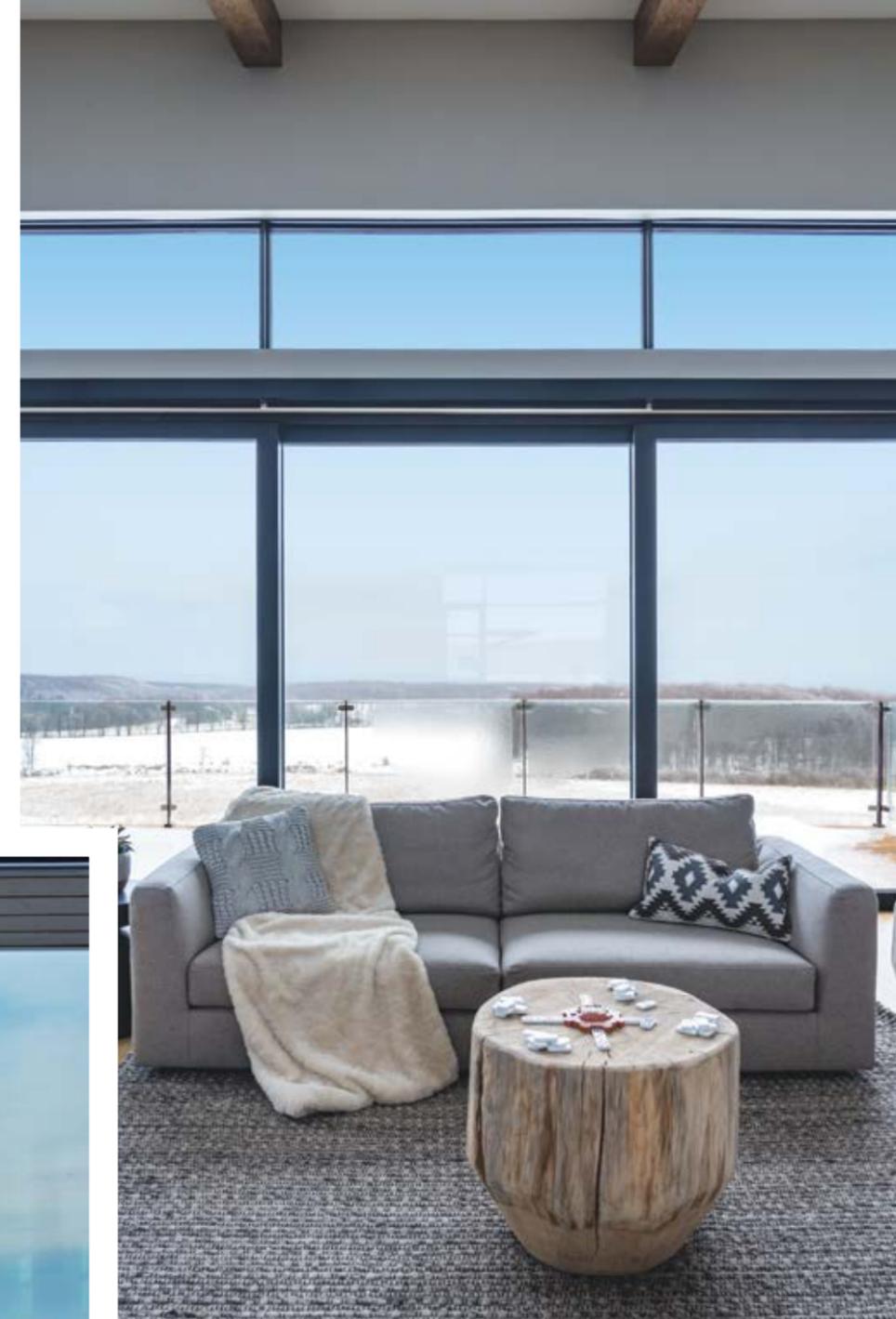


Jason McLean of McLean Contracting.

THE INCREDIBLE VIEW OF THE BAY CAN BE ENJOYED FROM THE UPPER DECK THAT RUNS THE LENGTH OF THE HOME WITH ACCESS FROM THE LIVING ROOM AND MASTER BEDROOM.



This door exits from the front foyer. The stairs have been integrated into the stone exterior with large armour stones acting as the stair rail. **ABOVE:** A floating vanity in the guest bathroom has the view reflected in the mirror. **RIGHT:** Try to keep your eyes on the dominoes game, while waiting for the snow squalls to roll in. Two sofas flank the wood-burning fireplace.

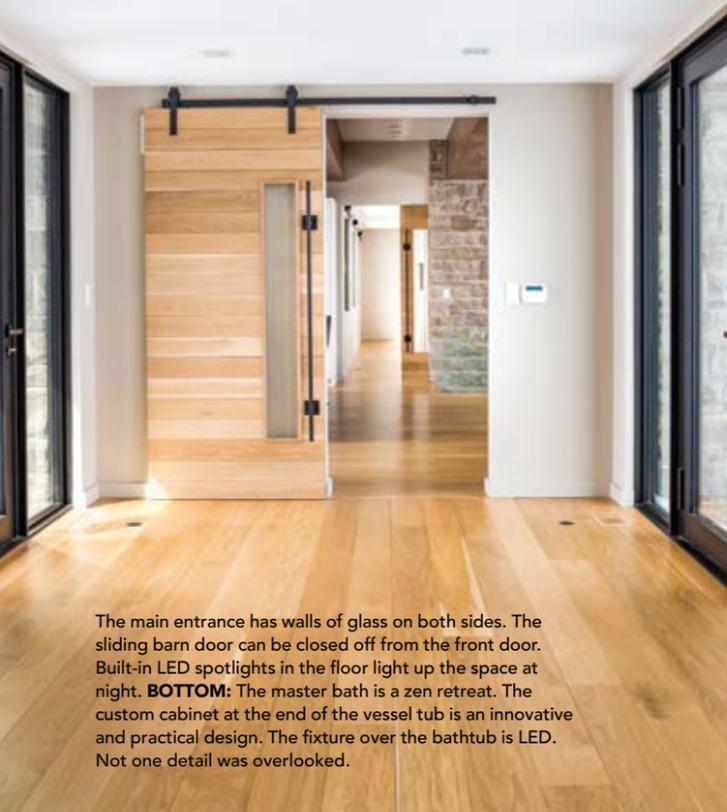


2 VIEW

"The view from the great room is incredible," says Jason. "From one side you look out at the bay and the other over Beaver Valley. This area is so rich with interesting geography that it's important to spend that bit of extra time in planning a home to make sure you're appreciating what nature has to offer." Jason walked the site extensively with the owners, assessing how the grade could be maximized to give them a high enough elevation to allow a view to the water, but still be tucked into the hillside to protect them from prevailing winds. *Continued on page 58*

THE TRANQUIL VIEW AT THE FRONT OF THE HOME CAN BE ENJOYED AS DINNER IS PREPPED.

The extra-wide dining table allows for two chairs at each end. The LED light over the table adds a beautiful design element and does not obstruct the view.



The main entrance has walls of glass on both sides. The sliding barn door can be closed off from the front door. Built-in LED spotlights in the floor light up the space at night. **BOTTOM:** The master bath is a zen retreat. The custom cabinet at the end of the vessel tub is an innovative and practical design. The fixture over the bathtub is LED. Not one detail was overlooked.

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DESIGN TEAM

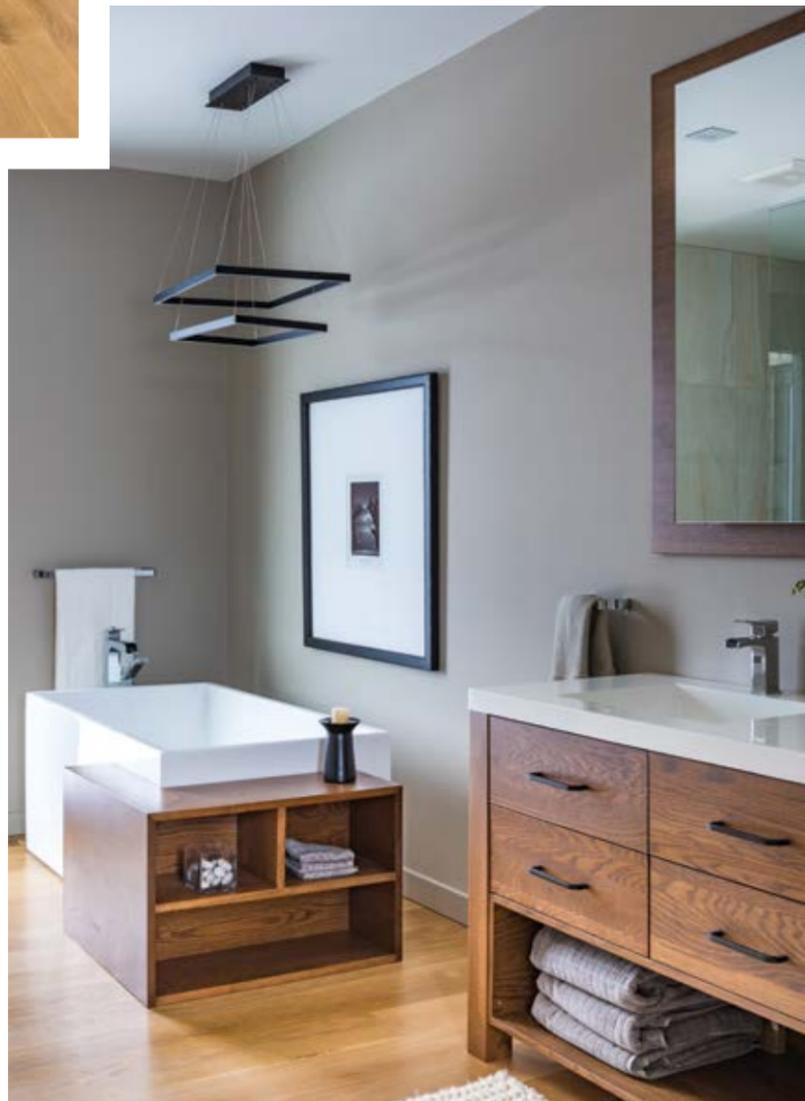
Collaborating with and leaning on creative designers can bring the vision for a home to fruition. The owners of this home brought their drawings to **Dan Barill**, of **Barill Engineering Ltd.**, to actualize. The home is set into the hillside, allowing a vehicle entry on the ground level and a walkout to the yard from the lower level. The design integrates the topography and setting of the home while executing the owner's vision. In the interior spaces, the owners worked with Jen McCulloch from Jennifer McCulloch Design to bring the home's contemporary look together.

THE SIMPLICITY OF THIS HOME BELIES THE CAREFUL PLANNING AND TECHNOLOGY THAT WENT INTO THIS BUILD.

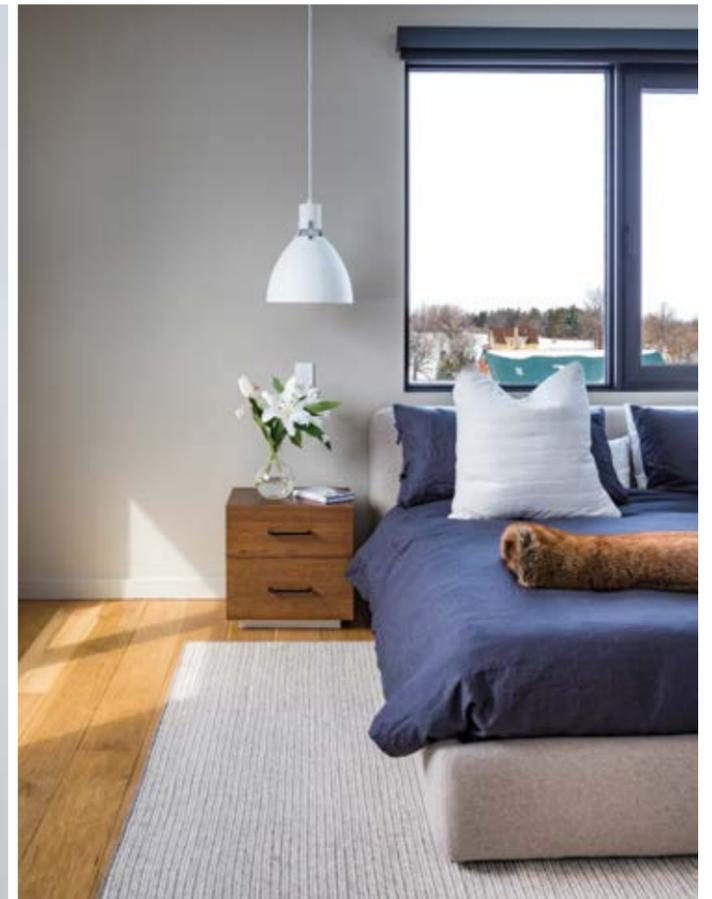
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TRADESPEOPLE

"I've had some of the same trades working with me for years, and their work speaks for itself," says Jason. "The quality they are able to produce is outstanding." From framers to finish carpenters, every member of the McLean Contracting team is essential to getting a job done on time and on budget. *Continued on page 60*



The floating feature wall in the bedroom is the backside of the open-plan master closet. **BOTTOM LEFT:** The custom closet in the master bedroom has a view to the bay. The integrated bench is a useful addition. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Automated shades blend into the frame of the windows in the master bedroom. Windows on three sides let the winter sunshine stream in.



5 OPTIONS

"When I'm scoping out a project for a client, of course, cost per square foot guides us, but within that there are so many decisions to consider," says Jason. "I like to present a comprehensive set of tiers, whether it be comparing tilt-and-turn windows to traditional sash windows, or artistic lighting to standard." Getting to know a client's approach and style is key to gathering the options that will be meaningful to them.



An Eames lounge chair sits by the linear fireplace in the lower-level family room. The stone used on the inside of the house is the same as the stone on the exterior. **LEFT:** The floating stairs with tempered glass railings to the lower level showcase the texture and colour of the stone.



6 CODE

"All my builds exceed the current building code," says Jason. His homes go above code for many reasons, including wanting to ensure his clients are able to take advantage of the latest technologies and techniques that might not yet be reflected in the code. But it's also in part because while the Southern Georgian Bay microclimate sees acute extremes in winter snow loads, homes in the area are used year-round and need to perform just as well in the summer heat. This Banks home uses an air source heat pump to supply radiant in-floor heating throughout the home. Its concrete form footings are well insulated with spray foam, and concrete floors help the home stay cool in warmer months. The exterior has steel and stone siding plus a standing seam steel roof, which will keep the home very low maintenance as the years go by.

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PLANNING

Timing is a big portion of Jason's responsibilities at McLean Contracting. Queuing up supplies to arrive when workers are ready to use them is an art. Planning is a skill Jason honed from many years of owning Georgian Bay Sprinklers and servicing its base of 2,000-plus seasonal clients. He sold that company last year to pore those skills into growing his contracting business, to much success, both professionally and personally. "My wife Allison and my two sons Carter and Zachary have been happy that I've started building houses for other families," says Jason. He and his wife and family have built and moved into several homes over 14 years, but they're enjoying their current home in downtown Collingwood right now.



Platform beds are ready for a sleepover in one of the bedrooms on the lower level. The flooring throughout is Terrazzo, a composite material. **LEFT:** The daughter's bedroom is a serene spot. LED wall sconces fold back completely when not in use. The bed has integrated side tables.

8 HOME AUTOMATION

Integrating technology into a home's design has become a pursuit of Jason's. "There are so many new ways to use technology to enhance your home," he says, from solar systems and backup generators to automated window coverings and wireless sound systems. The owners of this home can connect with their security system and adjust the heating and lights when they're on their way up for a ski weekend. "The home can even be playing their favourite album when they come through the door," says Jason. "They don't have to worry about a thing, whether they're home or away." **OH**

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