



LEFT: The stone apron and wood siding add a historical charm to this new home. The abundance of windows guarantees a light-filled interior. **BELOW:** Harold Robison of Bob Armstrong Construction stands by the dry-stacked fireplace. The gas insert is from Chantico Fireplace Gallery.

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HOME

STORY **KRISTIN SCHNELTEN** | PHOTOGRAPHY **RACHEL WYSSEN**
FLOWERS **COLLINGWOOD FLOWERS & HOME DECOR**

For decades, Brian and Susan Marshall spent nearly every winter weekend and much of each summer at their Thornbury-area property. But, faced with a multitude of repairs to the home and craving a layout that better suited their needs, they at one time considered leaving it all behind. *Continued on page 143*





ABOVE: Corinthian Kitchen & Bath Studio designed the large, functional kitchen. There are enough stools for the whole family to grab breakfast before heading to the slopes. The cabinets reach to the ceiling and are painted Wickham Gray by Benjamin Moore. **RIGHT:** With guests arriving shortly, a large piece of Parmesan cheese is ready to be enjoyed. Wooden dishes are from Clarkson's Home Store. Oranges and cheese provided by Goldsmith's Orchard Market.

The couple chose another property, hours from Georgian Bay, and had nearly finalized the purchase when the seller backed out. This close call spurred the couple and their two teenage sons, Nathan and Liam, to reevaluate their current getaway and all they appreciated about it – the wide, sweeping views of the bay and surrounding countryside, along with its proximity to skiing, sailing and amenities. The family realized they need not look elsewhere. They loved their property; it was merely the structure they needed to change. “In the end, he really did us a favour,” Brian says of the would-be seller.

The Marshalls ultimately chose to demolish the aging house, enabling them to build the home they needed on the land they loved. As they would oversee the project – their first homebuilding endeavour – from their home in the Toronto area, they searched for a local general contractor with a stellar reputation. Based on the recommendation of a trusted friend, the Marshalls contacted Harold Robison of **Bob Armstrong Construction**. Harold proved to be exactly

Continued on page 144





In the bright and welcoming front hall, sunlight streams in from the window above, the rear deck entrance and the front door.



what they needed: honest, knowledgeable and experienced in projects with long-distance clients.

Harold's strong team of trades – from the initial drawings provided by **Mountainside Design** through the finishing touches by **Complete Value Painting** – was another plus to the couple. "Harold has a great group of loyal tradespeople, many of whom have been with him for decades," says Brian. As a general contractor, Harold knows, "You're only as good as your trades. And coordination between each of them is key."

Taking less than a year to complete the project, Harold answered his clients' needs along with those of his subcontractors, including **Shuttleworth Contracting** (plumbing), **PWL Electric**, **Campbell Mechanical** (HVAC) and **Thornbury Computers**.

Continued on page 148



The beauty of the dry-stacked stone fireplace can be seen and enjoyed throughout the large, open-plan living room. The stone work was completed by Steve's Masonry. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** Railmaster Stairways Ltd. built and installed the stairs. **BOTTOM:** The carpet under the dining table defines this area and adds formality. The windows offer light and a view for lucky guests.



*This new house is
a gathering space
for family and a
wonderful entertaining
space for friends.*

The great room is where the family spends the most time. The soft grey in the sofa is picked up in the curtains and the carpet to unify this end of the room. The flooring and the tile backsplash were sourced at The Flooring Place Inc. and the entire home was painted by Complete Value Painting.



RIGHT: The colour grey is used again in the master bedroom to create a calm serene space. There is a view over the pool and to the fields beyond plus an entrance to the upper deck. Fur throw and pillows from Clarkson's Home Store.
BELOW: The floating vanity in the master bath has lots of storage. The linear mirror and light above draw the eye along to expand the space and offer a glimpse into the large shower. Located beside the en suite is a walk-in closet.



“Any hiccup that occurred along the way was easily remedied by Harold,” says Brian, “Our relationship with him was so important. He really ensured the housebuilding process was an easy one.”

The Marshall family’s completed vacation home is bright, open and welcoming – showcasing their never-ending views and providing charming spaces for the family to relax and play.

Corinthian Kitchen & Bath Studio designed the open-concept, dine-in kitchen, with its flat-panel, transitional-style cabinets (painted in Benjamin Moore’s Wickham Gray) and Caesarstone quartz countertop. The large, centrally located island ensures ample space for meal preparation as well as ease of conversation with those in the dining

and living rooms.

A focal point in the open space is the large dry-stack stone fireplace, designed and installed by **Steve’s Masonry** to surround the original wood-burning insert, installed by **Chantico Fireplace Gallery**. Adjacent to the main living space, with hardwood installed by **The Flooring Place Inc.**, is a large, sunny deck, providing the perfect location for sunset dinners overlooking the swimming pool and bay. “We wanted more than anything to have a deck with lounging and seating space, so we could live out there in the summer as much as we can,” says Brian.

Just off the deck is the main-floor master bedroom, with its large, wall-spanning windows and patio door. **Sara Smithson** at **Salnek’s Custom Window Treatments**

Continued on page 150



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LEFT: With its patchwork quilt and turquoise Euro pillows, the antique bed is a welcome spot for a good night's sleep, or a game of crokinole. **BELOW:** The second floor bathroom has everything for a spa experience. The tile used on the floor extends into the glass-enclosed shower. There is also a window over the vessel tub. **BOTTOM:** In one boy's bedroom, a large closet stows all his ski gear. The Navajo-inspired quilt injects some colour into this neutral room. Bedding in both bedrooms was sourced at Clarkson's Home Store.



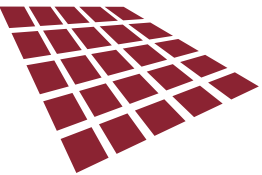
designed window coverings throughout the home, choosing understated styles to highlight the scenery beyond.

The wide and open central stairwell, built and installed by **Railmaster Stairways Ltd.**, floods the space and adjoining areas with natural light. Upstairs, three bedrooms and an additional washroom are well-appointed for visiting family and friends.

The spacious walk-out basement is home to the main play space: video games for the boys and crokinole for the whole family, where they often host hours-long tournaments with Grandma. This lower level also boasts another guest bedroom and bath, along with spacious storage for seasonal equipment. The Flooring Place supplied and installed the tile in the bathrooms.

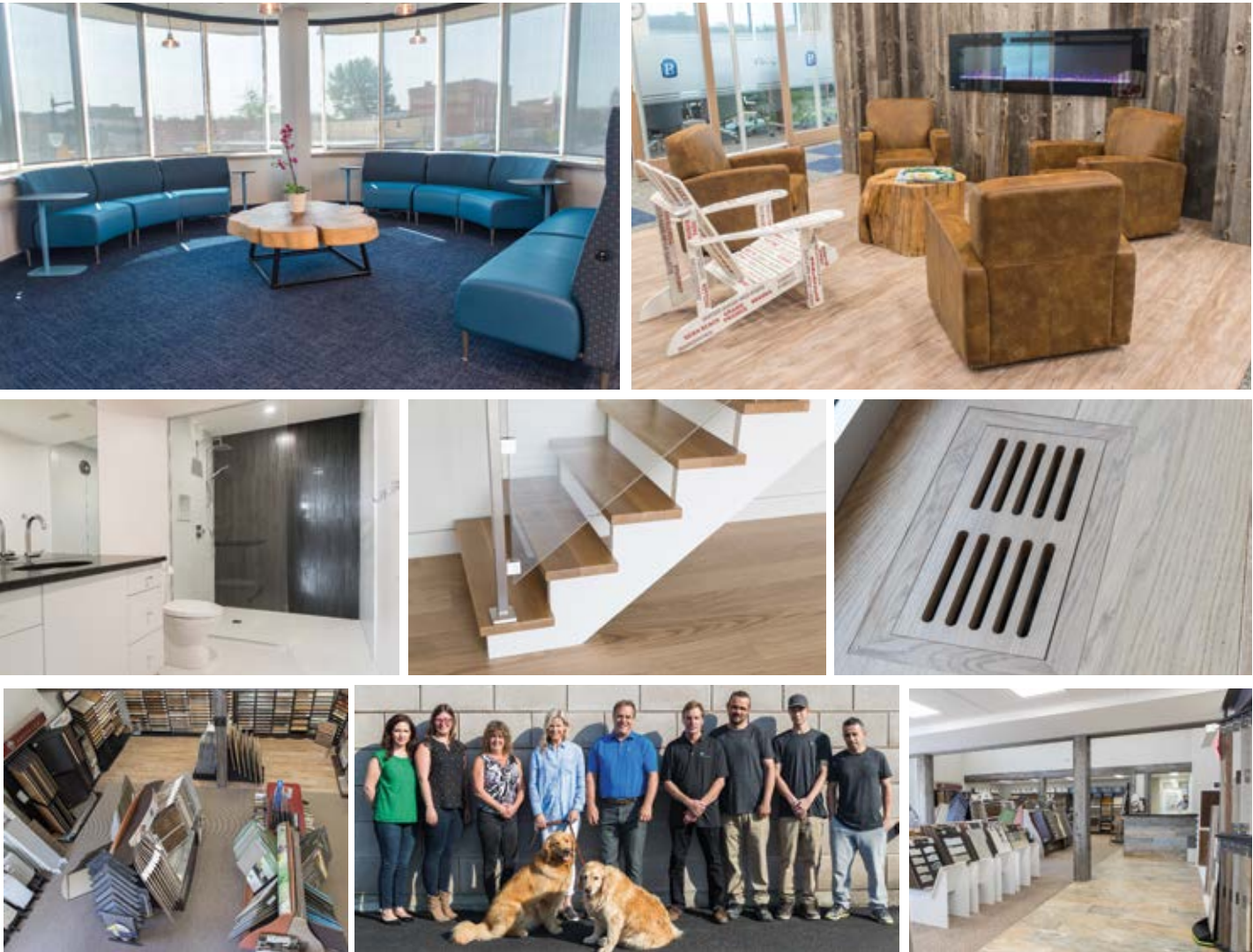
The twins and their outdoor passions were one of the driving forces behind rebuilding here. Nathan is on the Jozo Weider ski racing team and Liam snowboards with the Blue Mountain School. And, as avid sailors, the family is grateful to be so close to the bay. Both boys completed the sailing program over many summers at Sail Georgian Bay in Meaford, and are now continuing with the organization as volunteers – with an eye to teaching there one day in the future.

With everything they need so close, and a new home they love, Brian and Susan are quite grateful they chose to stay and rebuild – and have even considered permanently moving. Brian says, “When you’re able to enjoy your breakfast on the front porch in the morning sun while watching the hummingbirds, then end your day on the deck with the sun setting over the bay...” and Susan finishes, “It’s easy to imagine living here full time, leaving the city behind.” **OH**



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