



A three-tonne basalt rock formation from Washington State is transformed into a natural fountain in the Hatchers' backyard.

BACK ON THE Bluffs

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The Hatchers were long ready for a backyard retreat.

Their one acre ravine lot nestled in Georgian Bluffs, on the edge of Owen Sound, had served as an adventure park for their three growing sons for over a decade. When it was time to fix the retaining wall, which secured their 38-foot pool in place, Sheri and Dave Hatcher knew it was also time to re-imagine the space into something the maturing family could continue to enjoy for years to come.

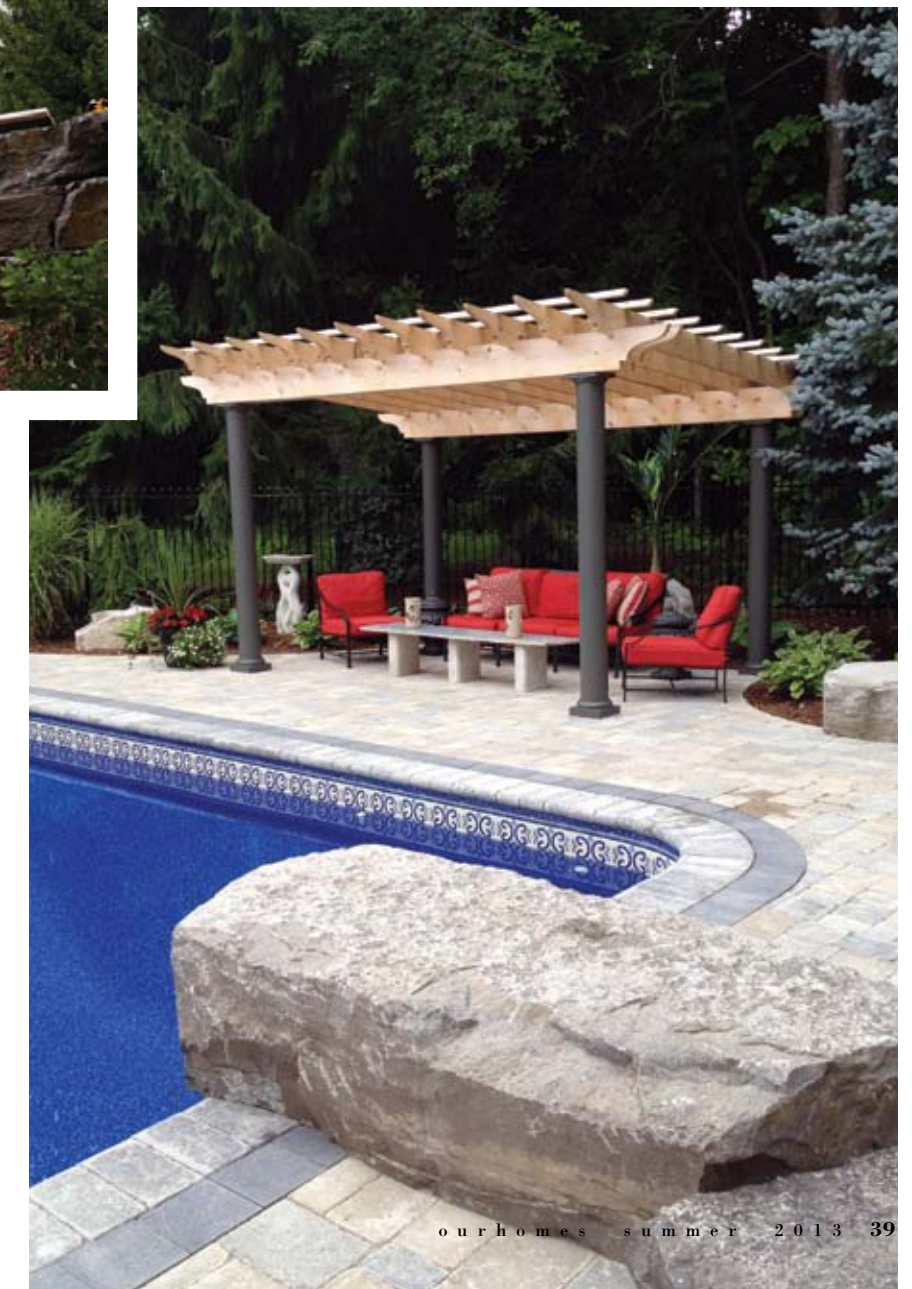
Sheri and Dave consulted with Mark and Ken Hutten of **Hutten & Co. Landscaping** in Owen Sound. The Huttens presented such tempting ideas that the couple had them begin work as soon as the snow melted in the spring of 2012.

Inspired by the local landscape, the transformation is stunning. “Sheri and I have always been into the outdoors and canoeing in Algonquin Park, so we tried to make everything as natural as we could,” notes Dave. The pair worked with Hutten to enhance the natural features of the ravine, such as using glass deck railings without a top rail, to create an unimpeded view, and laying a diving rock alongside the pool instead of a plastic board.

Hutten brought in armour stone to replace the aging wooden retaining wall and created a larger patio around the pool. Pavers, supplied by **Shouldice Designer Stone** in Shallow Lake, in a soft-yellow tone, blend nicely with the colour of the house. The patio connects to decking off the backdoor that hosts the family’s large outdoor dining area (decking sourced at **Moggie Valley Timber Inc.** in Holland Centre). A bridge leads off the deck, across a dry pebble stream bed below and a basement walkout (stone supplied by **Owen Sound Ledgerock Ltd.**). *Continued on page 40*



TOP: Ken and Mark Hutten admire the basalt fountain, which they installed. **TOP RIGHT:** The Hatcher's home is nestled in the heart of Georgian Bluffs, just minutes, but a world away from the bustle of Owen Sound. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** A comfortable pergola overlooks the diving rock, chosen to match the natural theme of the property. **MIDDLE:** A view from the dry riverbed showcases the new stone retaining wall. **ABOVE:** A pool house, flanked by a pair of Muskoka chairs, sits off to the side.





The central feature, a fountain rock brought from Washington State, stands seven feet high off the pool patio. It's a striking three-tonne basalt volcanic rock, which had to be lifted by crane over the house. Hutten & Co. built a tank underground to feed the water, with a cement pedestal to support the rock itself. Water burbles from the top of the rock, changing it from rust to grey to black as it trickles down the sides. Dramatic night lighting draws attention to its soothing sounds around the clock.

Lighting was a major focus of the project. While updating the plumbing in the swimming pool, the Hatchers took the opportunity to add underwater lights ([Clark Pools and Spas](#)). Lights were added to the hot tub and Hutten installed softly glowing feature lights into the trees and plantings around the property, to enhance the nightscape for entertaining. Fixtures were sourced at [Living Lighting](#).

At the rear of the property, a fire pit draws the boys and their friends. The pit has been well used this spring thanks to the sugar maples dotting the ravine. Dave and his sons boiled 250 litres of sap over a single weekend, after tapping countless maple trees on the property. Together they bottled five litres of maple syrup for the family to savour throughout the year.

Entering the house through a heavy glass and metal patio door, sourced at [Grey Bruce Patio Enclosures Inc.](#), the Hatchers step onto a painted mat commissioned from local artist [Carolyn Skene](#) with a Tom Thompson-Group of Seven-style forest sunset scene. The home reflects Sheri and Dave's devotion to their children.

In the mid-2000s, they hired [Jesco Builders](#) to renovate the main floor and kitchen (birch cabinets by [Hanover Kitchen & Bath Gallery](#)). Sheri wanted the household cook to have a vantage point of the family room and through to the front yard, where the boys played or caught the school bus. More recently, they replaced the kitchen flooring with Brazilian cherry sourced at [Greyfair Flooring and Furniture](#) in Owen Sound and installed by [Winmar](#). They converted a fourth garage bay at the front of the house into a spacious office, containing a desk and computer for each family member. Family photos adorn nearly every wall in the home, including a portrait by local photographer [James Masters](#). Their front yard converts into a hockey rink in winter where Dave and the boys play shinny.

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: (1) Early morning light streams through the front door into the Hatcher's entrance. A soaring skylight above brings in natural light during the afternoon. (2) The study, previously extra space in the garage, looks out over the front yard. (3) Warm wood features dominate the home and are complemented in the dining area by a solid wood table from Country Charm. (4) The open concept kitchen welcomes breakfast diners to a spacious curved island and eating area. (5) The basement rec room houses a pool table and sitting area, warmed by a gas fireplace insert. (6) Upstairs, just off the kitchen, is the much-loved mudroom, complete with cubbyholes and an extra fridge. (7) The central piece of the living room is an antique cart converted into a table from Restoration Hardware.



The comfortable master bedroom is a "wonderful place to be" for the couple. **TOP RIGHT:** A compromise between mother and son, one bright green wall adds a splash of colour to the teenager's bedroom. **RIGHT:** Making excellent use of a long basement, a wooden room divider creates a cosy guest sleeping space off of the rec room.

Sheri's favourite room is the envy of many parents – the mudroom. "It's my organized madness. I love that room," she says. Jesco designed large cubbies for the family to hang coats and stash shoes, plus a full wall of storage cabinets for all their gear.

It's a testament to the quality of the neighbourhood that 15 years later, Sheri and Dave remain in their first home in Owen Sound. The couple moved to Georgian Bluffs after meeting in Thunder Bay once Dave completed his studies. One of the first renovations they undertook in their new home was to breathe life into the front foyer. They hired **Gabrielle Phillips Designs** to open up the ceiling above the stairs into the attic with skylights. They welcome visitors through an impressive front door from **Georgian Bay Window and Door Ltd.**, adorned with new windows on either side. They also enjoyed working with **Northern Heating & Ventilation**.

"It's a fantastic neighbourhood; at one point there were 34 kids living on this street," says Dave. The family can walk to the Bruce Trail nearby and explore the never-ending escarpment. With their new backyard escape, says Dave, "We're planning to stay here at least until the children have moved on – and after they leave Owen Sound this could give them a reason to come back."

Out back, beyond the new pool deck, a zip line and tree fort from the boys' formative years is preserved – a beautiful space blending old and new memories for both parents and sons. **OH**

SOURCE GUIDE

Carolyn Skene, Clark Pools and Spas, Country Charm Mennonite Furniture, McNabb Edward Roofing, Folmer Landscaping and Garden Centre, Fulfords Hardware, Gabrielle Phillips Designs, Grey-Bruce Patio Enclosures, Greyfair Flooring and Furniture, Hanover Kitchen & Bath Gallery, Hutten & Co. Landscaping, Inside Ideas, John Price Painting and Decorating, Ledgerrock, Legates Fine Furniture, Living Lighting, MacDonald's BrandSource Furniture and Appliances, Martin's Home Hardware, Moggie Valley Timber Inc., Natural Path Stone and Garden, Northern Heating & Ventilation, Owen Sound Ledgerrock Ltd., Russell Fencing & Decks, Shouldice Designer Stone, Winmar



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