



Odeen Probert practises her swing on the tee of the spectacular first hole at the Raven Golf Club at Lora Bay, while husband Bill watches. The Proberts love the community and their custom home, built by Bob Armstrong Construction.

RIGHT: The Proberts selected rustic stone and vertical siding for the exterior of their home. The covered porch is a shady spot to enjoy the street-scape and their gardens.

BELOW LEFT: Their backyard is beautifully landscaped (RockSolid) and is the ideal spot to relax, entertain and enjoy the summer sunshine.

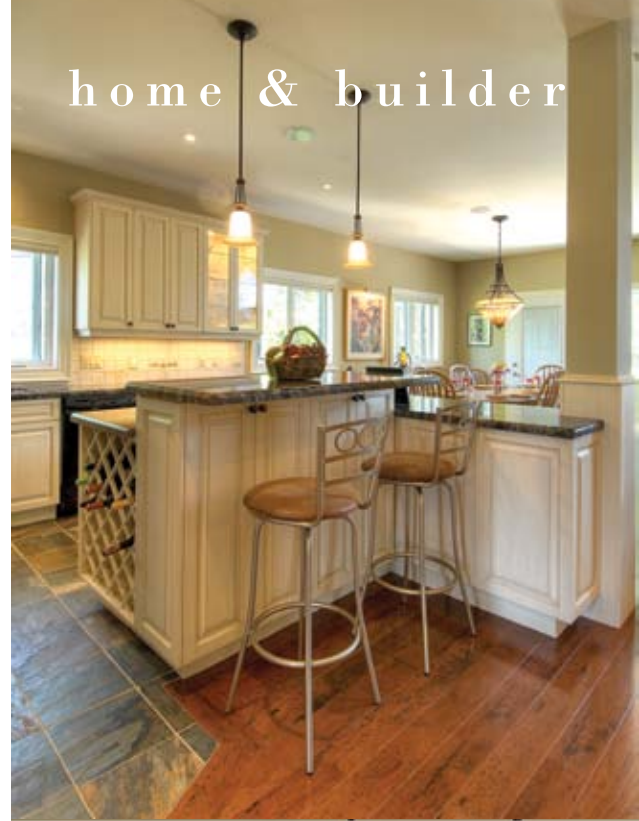
BELOW RIGHT: Bill and Odeen take a break from their golf game to enjoy some down time on their front porch.



A GOLFER'S *Utopia*

BY SHELBY HILSON // PHOTOGRAPHY BY SANDY MACKAY

Bill and Odeen Probert scoured the province for the perfect golf community to spend their retired years in and found everything they were looking for and more at Lora Bay. *Continued on page 108*



A few years ago the Probert couple decided it was time to leave their Whitby home of 25 years behind and find something that was more suited to their love of golf and their recreational lifestyle.

"When we drove into Lora Bay for the first time and saw the water behind the golf course we looked at each other and said, 'We could live here,'" says Bill. And the golf course, co-designed by Tom McBroom and Tom Lehman, exceeded their expectations.

"It's a course I could play every day and never be bored. Every hole is unique and challenging and course conditioning is excellent. The views of Georgian Bay and the Peaks are the icing on the cake, and with five sets of tees everyone can enjoy it."

After trying out the course, the Proberts started looking at housing options and came across a uniquely shaped piece of land backing onto the Georgian Trail that wasn't necessarily for sale, but had a realtor's sign on it. The owner accepted their offer and that's how the story of Bill and Odeen's dream home begins. *Continued on page 110*



Their lovely kitchen opens to the dining area and the living room.

LEFT: Odeen wanted an open concept main floor with a bright kitchen and creamy white cabinets, glazed just so. The granite-topped island includes a breakfast bar and lots of additional storage.





The Proberts live on the main floor. Bill's office is just off the foyer. The living room is bright and airy with a view of the upstairs, where guests, including their new grandson, stay when they come for a visit.



Having no ties to this area, the couple asked around for a short list of custom home builders and invited a handful to explore the site. In the end they chose **Bob Armstrong Construction Ltd.** owned by Harold Robison.

"Harold was the only one who really walked the lot," says Bill. "He was also very positive about the possibilities."

The Proberts worked with architect Bill Leithead to design the home they had always wanted.

Their last home was missing the open concept they desired and they wanted to be able to live on the main floor of the house without trekking up and down stairs all the time.

Oddly enough, the staircase that takes you from basement to loft serves as the home's focal point and is one to be admired. **Jack Ploeg** of **Northern Custom Stairs** built the stairs while **Complete Value Painting** stained them to perfectly match the home's distressed hickory floors and Harold sites them as his favourite feature.

The open concept main floor boasts a large kitchen with lightly antiqued wood cabinets and uniquely designed granite countertops. "The pattern reminds me of lava flow," says Odeen. There's also a raised counter with stools perfect for a morning snack and cup of coffee. *Continued on page 112*

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The kitchen opens to an informal dining room and great room that are both filled with natural light and look out to the tree sheltered trail. The great room has a beautiful fireplace with stone surround, framed by lovely built-in shelves that stretch the entire width of the wall.

On the other side of that wall is a luxurious master bedroom that features relaxing earth-tones, ample closet space and a full en suite washroom complete with a glass walled shower.

The best part though is definitely the three-season sun porch built off the master with a full view of the gorgeously landscaped yard by **Rock Solid Landscapes**. The Proberts used stonework to create a maintenance-free outdoor space where they could relax, take in the scenery and enjoy a soak in the hot tub.

Although the main floor space is very open, it is also inviting, warm and comfortable the way Bill and Odeen wanted.

"We wanted it to be informal and cosy," says Odeen. "We wanted a destination place for our children and their children to visit," adds Bill.

Their two grown sons and very first grandbaby have made it just that, spending vacations and holidays in Lora Bay. Both of the Probert sons take after dad and are avid golfers, though it's unlikely they get in the four to five games Bill does each week. *Continued on page 114*

The large master en suite has a walk-out to a lovely three-season screened-in porch with an impressive Weatherwall system.

ABOVE: The open staircase is a beautiful architectural feature of the home, built by Bob Armstrong Construction.



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LEFT: The porch off the master bedroom is a favourite destination for Bill and Odeen. It's a great place to enjoy morning coffee while reading the newspaper.

BELOW: The powder-room sink, carved from stone, is a show-stopper.

SOURCE GUIDE

Quanbury Flooring, Di Pietra Design, Ashton's, Ken Childs, Campbell Mechanical, Jack Whittlin, Thornbury Computer and Protection Dealer, Meaford Carpets, MacDonald's Countrywide Furniture & Appliances, Shuttleworth Contracting, G Lawrence Enterprises, Rock Solid Landscapes, Jeffclan Roofing Worx, John McCaffrey Masonry, Havens Home Hardware/Bill Brown Lumber, Cedarport Windows and Doors, Campbell Mechanical, Billy Hill Pine, Complete Value Painting, Bear Electric.

The Proberts have four guest rooms, two on the upper level and two in the basement. They weren't planning on finishing the basement as this home was meant to be a downsize from the last, but once their grandson was born they had Harold finish the bedrooms as well as a large family room.

This is the first home Bob Armstrong Construction Ltd. has built in Lora Bay, but Harold hopes it's not the last. He has built custom homes all over Southern Georgian Bay and says, "I enjoyed working with the Proberts, they were very nice and easy going and everything worked out well."

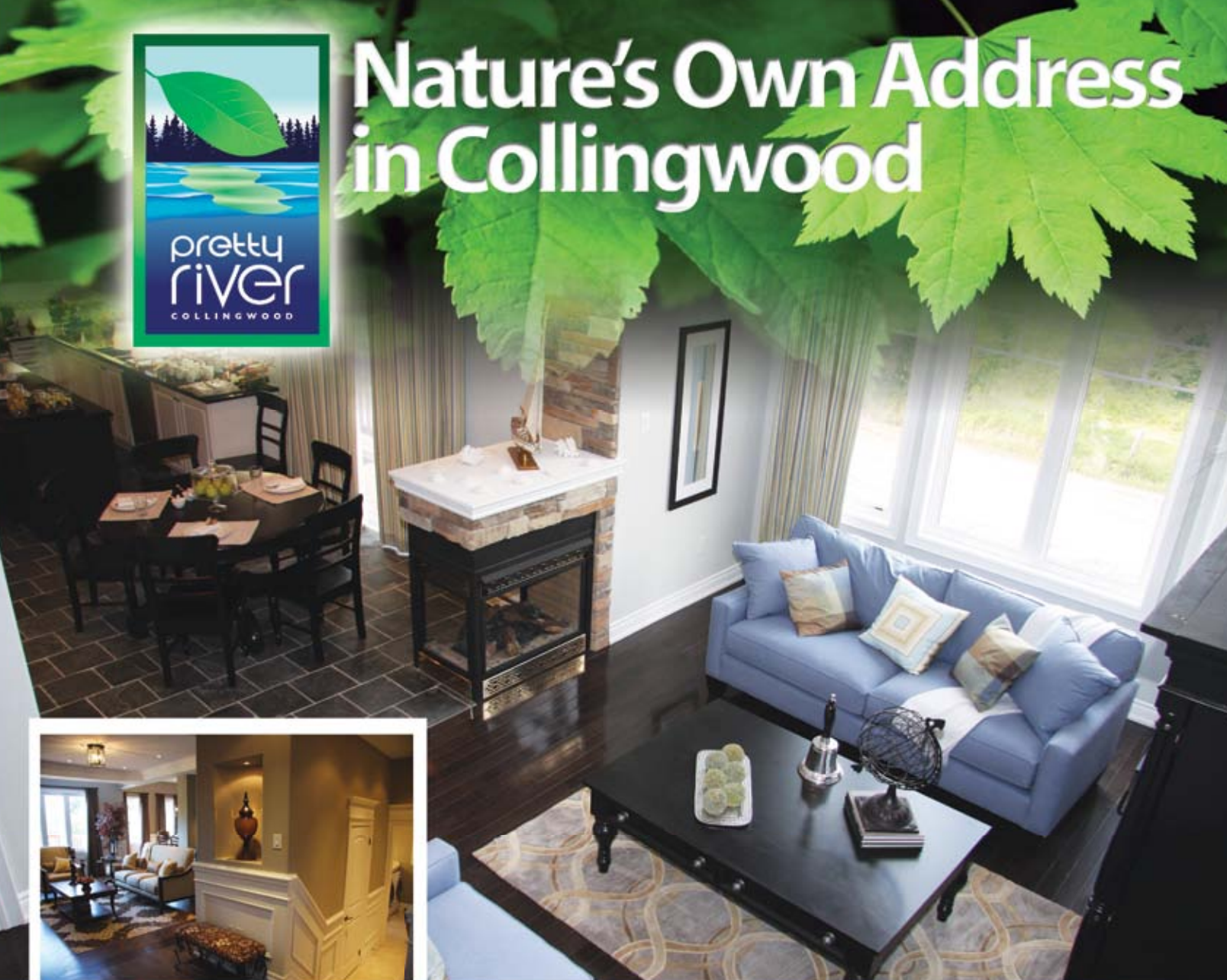
Aside from their spectacular home, Bill and Odeen couldn't be happier with their decision to move to Lora Bay. They say the community there is wonderful and that they went from knowing no one to several neighbours in just a couple of weeks.

Every Friday night a meet-and-greet is hosted at the Lora Bay Lodge, there are a number of clubs to join, a community support program called Helping Hands and several events to attend.

"They had a Halloween party and I haven't been out for Halloween since my 20s!" says Odeen.

Bill and Odeen have both taken up snowshoeing, joining groups of 30 to 40 people some weekends. Odeen has learned to play Bridge and they both, of course, play a significant amount of golf during the warm months.

Confident that they couldn't have chosen a better builder or a better community, the couple wear smiles from ear to ear. "We have absolutely no regrets," says Bill. "We love it here." **OH**



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