

# WITH A LITTLE HELP from our Friends

PHOTOGRAPHY **WALTER FRANCYK**

*A PROFESSIONAL TOUCH MAKES MANY THINGS SO MUCH EASIER.*



**SONJA SANDERSON,**  
*DESIGN CONSULTANT,*  
**KAYLA NICKLE,**  
*ADMINISTRATION,*  
**NANCY NICKLE,**  
*OWNER*  
**GILLIAN FOX,**  
*DESIGN CONSULTANT*  
**& KATHY DUFF,**  
*DESIGN CONSULTANT*  
*Birchview Design*

**What's new at Birchview Design?**  
Birchview Design is expanding. We are excited to announce we have welcomed two new team members in the recent months. Each member brings a different background of expertise, which allows the firm to offer an all encompassing, full service resource to our clients.

**In what do you specialize?** At Birchview Design we offer a variety of services including residential, cottage and commercial design. From one-room projects to large scale retail, we do it all. However, our speciality is truly in new builds. We work closely with our client and their builder to take their dream home concept and turn it into reality, allowing the client to focus on the fun and exciting aspects of their new space and none of the stress.

**What makes your business unique?** At Birchview Design, we pride ourselves in offering superior client service. From concept to completion, we are there every step of the way. The firm runs on communication, transparency and an understanding that each curated space is unique. Not only do clients experience this superior service from our team, but we work with an extended group of trusted sub-trades and suppliers who value quality and service as much as we do.



**AL ROSE,** *PRESIDENT*  
*Stalwood Homes*

**What's new with Stalwood Homes?** The company is expanding, with five residential sites in various developments, including Brighton, Cobourg and Grafton, as well as a rental housing project in Cobourg. "We've revamped our website to be more user-friendly," says Al Rose. "We've created an online portal called Dream Home Navigator that will allow our condo buyers to choose their kitchen and bathroom cabinets, flooring, plumbing fixtures and other features online. It lets clients make their own choices in the comfort of their home and think about what they want to have in their new home," he says.

"It allows them to do it on their own schedule, when they feel like it."

**What's key to Stalwood's success?** "Attention to detail, communicating and listening. The key is to listen to your client and deliver exactly what they want," he says. Stalwood builds about 60 homes every year for every demographic, at every price point, with the same Stalwood quality. "That's been our key – to be able to do it all." With more than 30 employees, Stalwood is a team effort. "Everybody has their areas of expertise and they're very good at what they do. Each of them is essential to the team's success."

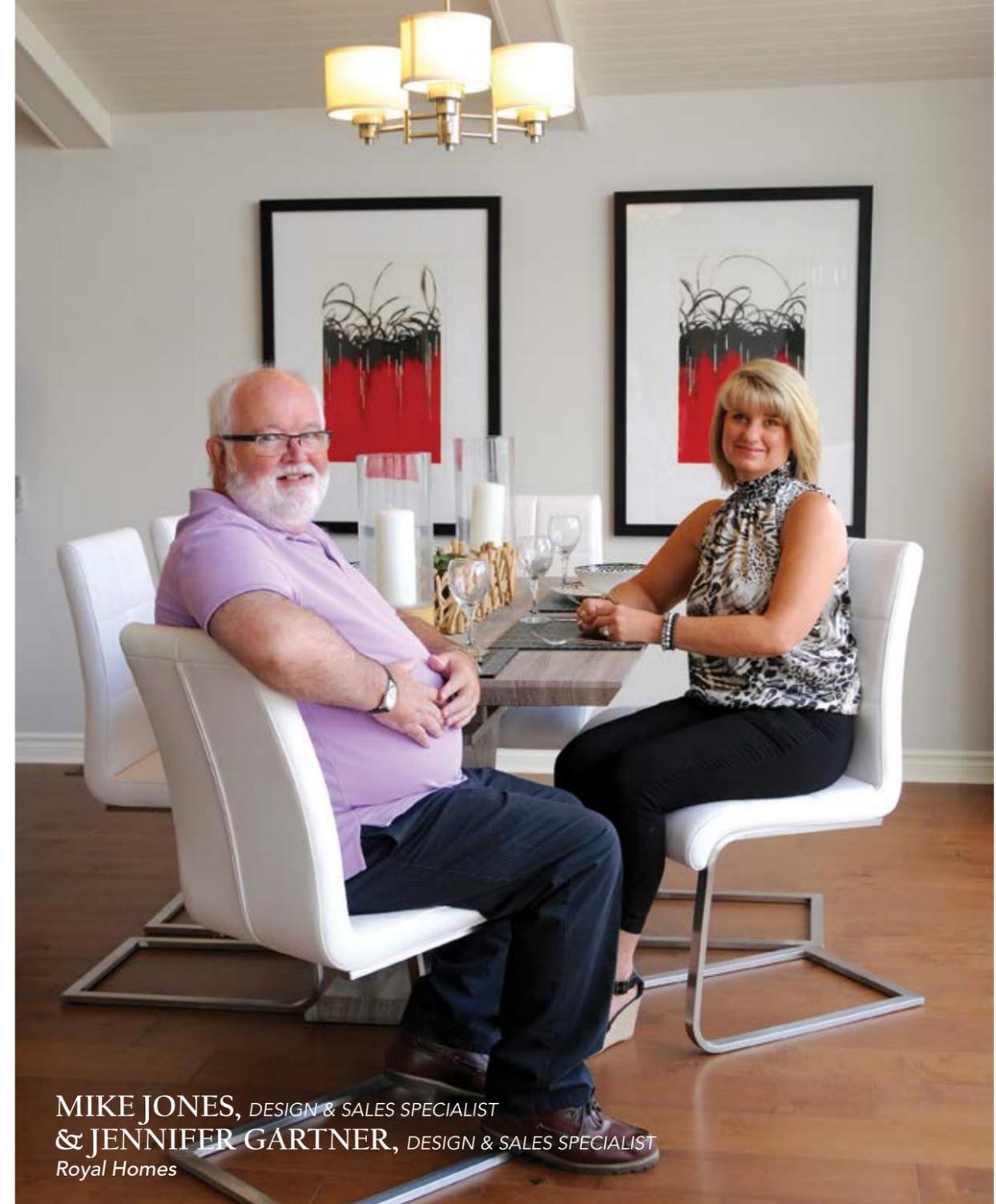
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**SUSAN BOWIE**  
SALES REPRESENTATIVE  
*Royal LePage Frank  
Real Estate, Brokerage*

**How can you help clients?** “I’ve been selling homes for almost 16 years and with my background in design I have a unique ability to help sellers prepare their home for sale and buyers to see different aspects of a home that might not already have been there,” says Susan Bowie. She studied interior design at Ryerson University and owned a shop on the Danforth before moving to Peterborough and getting her real estate licence. “I enjoy working with people closely and building a relationship, beyond just putting up a sign and getting the sale done. I’m always making sure I’m doing all the things I need to do to fulfill the client’s needs.”

**How can you help those people buying a home?** “From the buyer’s perspective, sometimes you have a buyer who has a tight budget and so sometimes you have to look beyond a client’s initial criteria and see what possibilities a home might have for them. What can really help is to be able to talk it through and see what they can do with the house to make it right for them.” As the market changes, some buyers have to be more creative, she says. “A lot of buyers have to look beyond that first glance and see the possibilities.”



**MIKE JONES, DESIGN & SALES SPECIALIST**  
& **JENNIFER GARTNER, DESIGN & SALES SPECIALIST**  
*Royal Homes*

**Tell us about your company:** Royal Homes is a custom prefab homebuilder, specializing in custom homes and cottages throughout Ontario. Each of our locations offers a fully furnished model home and design centre. Royal Homes has been in business since 1971 and continues to be a forerunner in building design, technology and finishing in the modular home industry.

**What makes Royal Homes unique?** We are flexible in what we design for our clients. They may choose from our standard designs and make revisions to suit their tastes, or we can custom design them a home or cottage to suit their requirements and budget, or build from their plans. Since the homes are built in a factory and delivered to the site, we are able to build year-round.

**What are the advantages of prefabricated homes?** The prefab units are built in a factory under a controlled environment, which ensures the home is built to high standards. The homes are built square and have numerous inspections along the way. Since the home is pre-designed and pre-engineered, and the clients choose their finishes before the home is built, they have a firm price. Clients know when their home is being produced, delivered and finished.



**CHARLES & SHARON HARWOOD, OWNERS**  
*Harwood Kitchens*

**What's new at Harwood Kitchens?**

"We recently won an award on Houzz. We were voted the kitchen business with the best customer service," says Charles Harwood. For two years in a row, Harwood took home the Peterborough & The Kawarthas Home Builders' Association awards for best kitchen design under 100 square feet and over 100 square feet.

**Where are kitchens trending?** "People continue to like open-concept designs, so lots of the renovations we do involve opening the walls up to make the kitchen part of the rest of the house, sharing the light, making the traffic flow a little nicer, with maybe a big island instead of a wall separating the kitchen from the family room or living room," says Charles. "There's lots of new colours this year – all of them white," he smiles. "White kitchens are still the most popular colour." Multi-coloured tile backsplashes are also favoured, says Sharon. "The lighter wood colours are a good seller when people want wood," she says.

**How can you help with design?** "Our job is to try and stay at the forefront of it, so we can advise our customers about what's in style and sometimes, more importantly, what's not in style, so that they don't buy something and find they've bought it at the tail end of a trend."



**JENNIFER ROBERTS, OWNER**  
*Southern Comfort Hearth & Home*

**What's new at Southern Comfort?** There's always new items in the showroom, lots of great sofas and Canadian solid wood furniture. We're always bringing in the latest fabrics, the latest trends and styles of sofas. It's great to come in, sit in everything, find the style that suits you best. We are also a great place to find that one piece of art you have been looking for.

**What are the trends in fireplaces?** Fireplaces are forever changing. Expect to see new efficiencies and modern looks, especially for wood fireplaces. Clean lines are the trend in fireplaces. Homeowners are

moving away from the traditional fireplace look and we find owners favour fireplaces with clean lines, more of a modern look.

**Your services?** For fireplaces we provide turnkey installations. From helping you decide which unit is right for you to installation and finishing, gas/propane line installations, chimney and venting systems, barbecue connections and WETT installations. For interior design, we'll help you pull the room together. We assist with floor layouts, colours, art and furniture layouts.

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**ANN GRILLS, DESIGNER, DAN STANFORD, PRESIDENT, BEVERLY WELLINGTON & STACEY LAWRENCE, DESIGNERS**  
Cabinetree

**What's new at Cabinetree?** "We have invested relentlessly in modern, automated equipment, which has managed to keep our costs down and allowed us to do the high-end custom product at reasonable costs, but also to have a product that fills a segment that is more in the middle of market," says Dan. "We certainly have had lots of comments from people who had not realized that our product is as affordable as it is. We are trying to move to a broader segment of the market. Lots of people presume we're non-affordable. When they get here they find we're amazingly affordable."

**What are the advantages of a custom kitchen?** "There are many. One of them is we can make the cabinets exactly the right size, so there aren't fillers and compromises made in terms of storage. We have standard finishes and custom finishes where people can have colours that will match exactly what they want. We can customize details in lots of areas," Dan says. "There is also accountability, the fact that the person building the kitchen is doing so right in our community," he says. "We contribute to the community and that's a healthy thing. We think that the fact we're here makes a lot of people confident that they're going to get a good job and it's not misplaced confidence."

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**DAVE URRY,  
LARRY SPEERS,  
STEVE DURAND,  
JIM SMITH &  
LAURA SPENCLEY**

*Linwood Custom Homes*

**What does Linwood provide clients?**

Linwood Homes has a design library of more than 500 home plans in many different styles and sizes to suit any budget or location. "We can also create your own unique custom design," says Larry Speers. "Whatever you want to build, we have a design and material package or home kit to meet your needs."

**Why do people choose Linwood homes?**

In its 50th year, Linwood has won the most national awards for "outstanding custom home" by using design and material home packages and a local builder or Linwood Construction services. These awards have been achieved even when competing against homes that cost much more. Linwood's homes have the wow factor or that something extra that immediately creates a lasting impression of value and quality, Larry says. Linwood homes showcase soaring ceilings, harmonious living spaces and an abundance of light. Linwood's use of natural wood features, including western red cedar and exposed Douglas fir beams, is admired throughout the world.

**What advantages does custom design offer?**

Linwood's proven track record means clients benefit from award-winning expertise to get an outstanding custom home at a great price. The Linwood home package includes the creation of a top-quality design. Working with Linwood's design experts means clients can create a site-specific concept that can actually be built and meets their budget requirements.



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**Mark Jenden Selway**  
Sales Representative Bowes & Cocks Limited Brokerage

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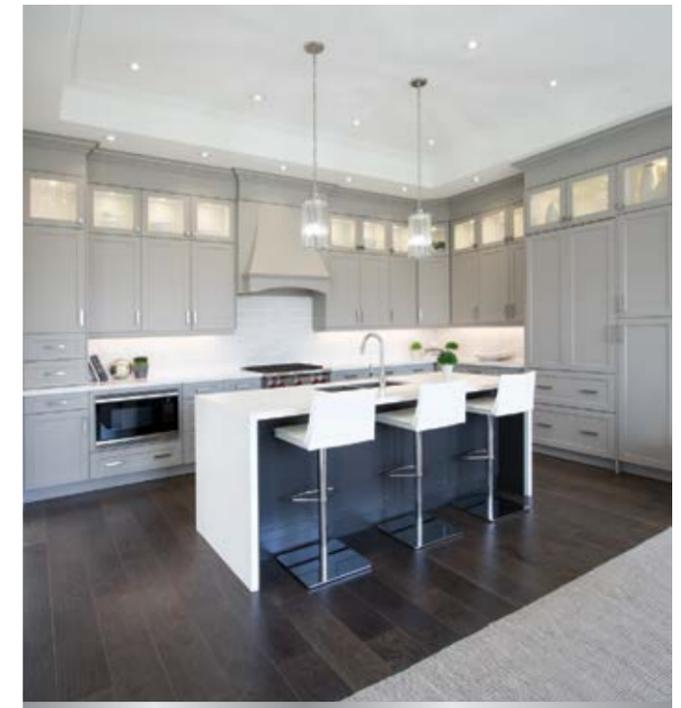
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**Why do people use your expertise?** We have over 30 years of combined experience, which allows us to create anything you can imagine. We enjoy working with our clients, guiding them through all the steps and choices like finishes, materials, colours... all the way to completion. We work with all styles and budgets to ensure our clients enjoy a functional and beautiful space.

**What's the best thing about your work?** Sharing the moments when our customers see their ideas and dreams turn into a custom-built reality – that's the best.

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**RON BEAUSOLEIL,**  
PRESIDENT  
*Overhead Door Company of  
Peterborough*

**Tell us about your company:** In business for 27 years, this company performs residential garage door and electric-opener installation, service and repair. It also supplies and installs a wide range of commercial and industrial door products, including insulated sectional steel doors, rolling steel doors and rolling steel fire doors.

**What can you do for homeowners?** “We can send a salesperson out to give an estimate,” says Ron. “With the internet, a lot of people have a rough idea of what they want before they even call here,” he says. “We can give them a ballpark price over the phone if they have a rough idea of their size and what they’re looking for.” He encourages people to come to the company’s showroom. “So they can see the product and real colours,” he says. “We like them to see the real thing before they make their final decision.”

**How did you get into this business?** “I graduated college when there wasn’t a lot of work,” he recalls. With a background in electrical-mechanical engineering and a good knowledge of electrical, pneumatic and hydraulic systems, he bought the door business. He enjoys the variety of changes, unique situations and the people he meets in this business. **OH**

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