



# STONE MASTERY

STORY SARA MARTIN | PHOTOGRAPHY SANDY MACKAY

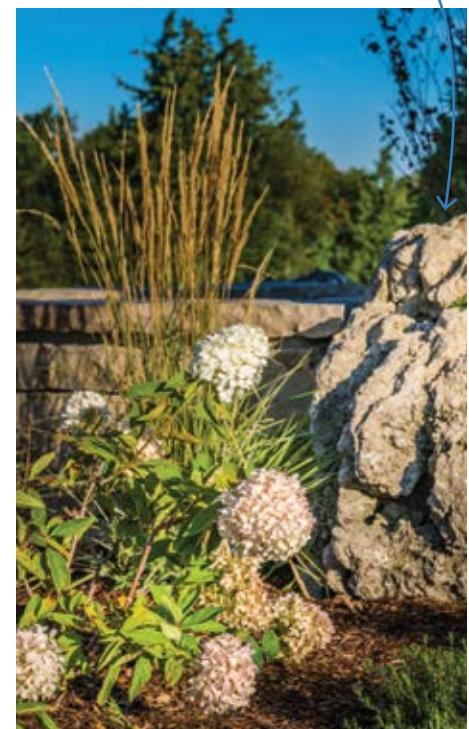
**W**anting to build a true, turn-key home in the Georgian Bay Club Estates, Taylor Doering of Pinnacle Building Group Corp. knew that the home wouldn't be finished until the landscaping was established.

To complement the handsome home with a winding cobblestone drive, and dry-stacked walls as well as a back patio substantial enough to balance the spectacular view over Georgian Bay, he brought in **Mark Higginson** of **Natural Stonescapes**. Mark knew how to create a cohesive union between the house and the grounds. He artfully blends 100 tons of limestone rockery with natural stone walls, jumbo flagstone slabs and natural stone steps together throughout the property to give the impression the home has stood for decades. But much of the work in this landscape installation is underground – drainage, grading and compaction – which is a necessity on the edge of the escarpment like this, and one of Mark's strengths after over 30 years in landscaping – 25 working with homes in The Blue Mountains and Southern Georgian Bay. The unity of the outdoor space with the house has truly created a timeless property. This home's prospective owners would need simply to turn the key and move in.



◀ This stately home is an impressive addition to the cul-de-sac adjacent to the Georgian Bay Golf Club. The gentle curve of the driveway slows the approach to the house. The careful planting of maple trees will gradually, over time, screen the front of the house.

Limestone boulders covered in natural moss and lichen suggest the property is established beyond its years.



◀ With boulders acting as bookends, the dry-stacked, low, stone wall repeats the facade of the home and adds height to the front gardens. It also creates a comfortable setting for street-address signage. The wall is a textural backdrop to grasses and hydrangeas.

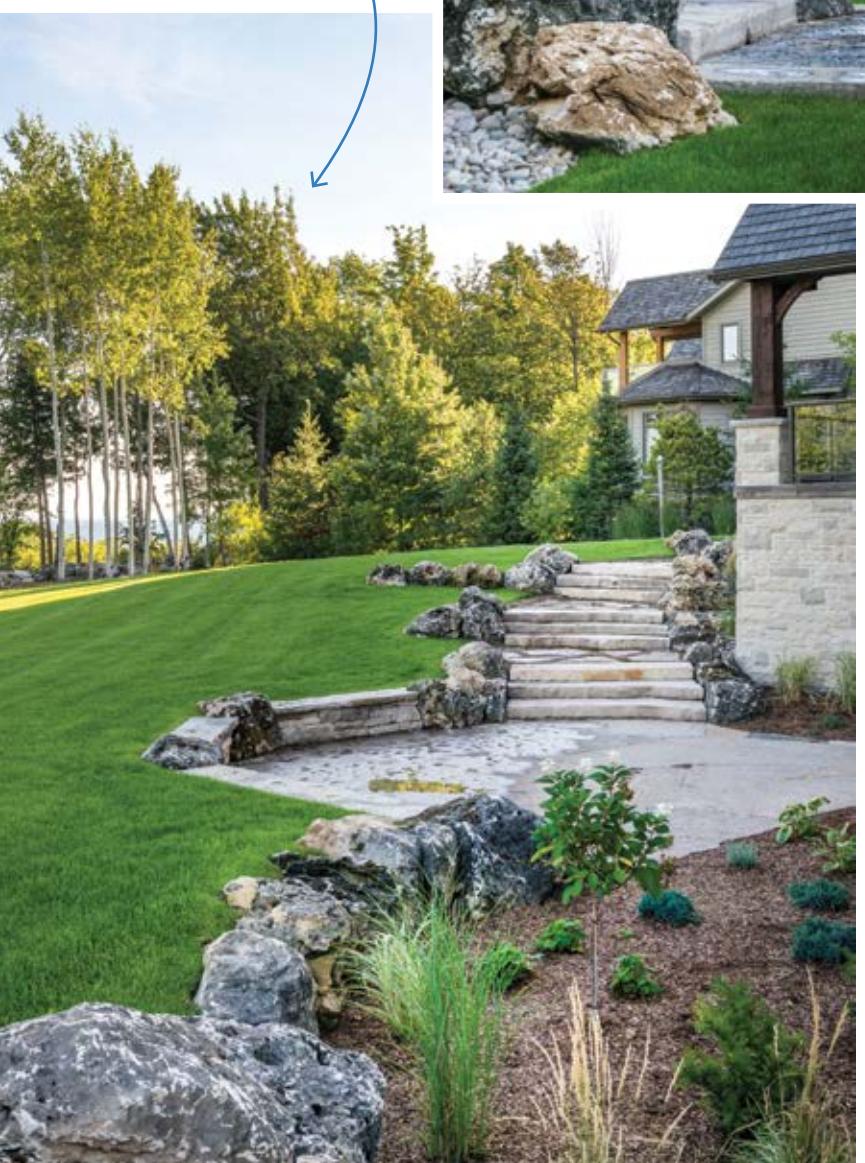
◀ The concrete driveway is sectioned and edged with bandings of tumbled stone. The smooth and rough textures play off against each other making the large driveway blend into the landscape.



◀ Mark laid massive slabs of natural flagstone together with precision to draw visitors to the front door. The mulched perennial beds that line the walkway are anchored with boulders that again bookend low, dry-stacked stone walls that run across the face of the house. The transitions between the boulders and the stacked stones are tight and masterful. *Continued on page 94*

Approaching the front door, four beautiful, solid-stone steps lead up to the front portico.

## landscape tour

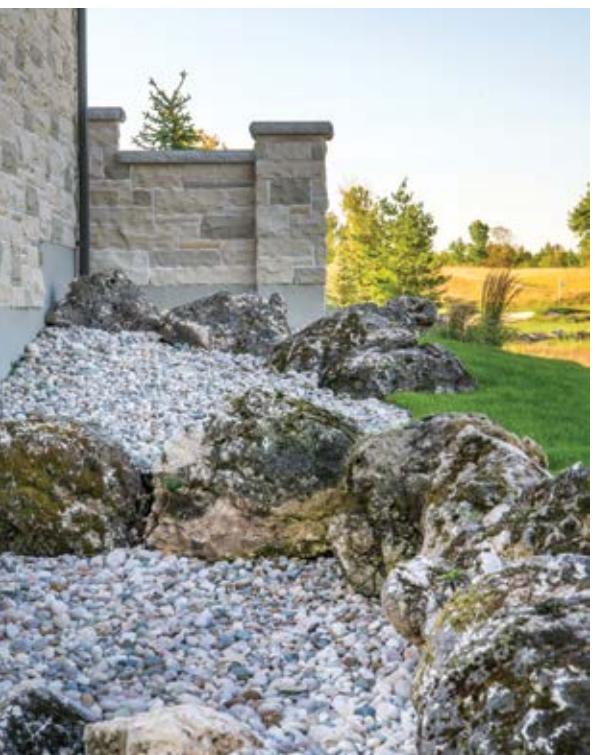


Trees were thinned at the rear of the yard so that even from this area the view is breathtaking.



▲ At the rear of the house are three distinct levels, each offering a beautiful view of Georgian Bay. This large flagstone patio is accessible between the home's lower level walk-out and the upper-level deck. It offers plenty of room for comfortable seating to enjoy the view.

▼ Grading and water runoff were important aspects to consider on this sloping property at the edge of the escarpment. Even the drip lines are offered handsome treatment with river stone ringed with large limestone boulders to retain the slope.



▲ Three sets of natural-faced, seven-inch irregular slab stone steps are spaced with flagstone landings and gently lead the way to the lower jumbo flagstone patio and lower-level walkout. Large lichen-covered boulders interspersed with smaller rocks line the stairs and act to retain the soil on the grade. The amphitheatre-like lower patio is edged with more dry-stacked stone walls that double as seating. **OH**

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