



Carol Conlin combined traditional cottage architecture with contemporary styling for her new summer home on the Indian River.

serenity RIVERSIDE

STORY CHARLENE PECK | PHOTOGRAPHY SANDY MACKAY



LEFT: River rock lines the swales that direct water in the expertly landscaped front yard.
BELOW: Space over top of the two-car garage was transformed into a large guest room.
BOTTOM: Chairs on the dock are an ideal place to watch the world and the geese go by on the river. Norstar covered the home's many intricate roof surfaces.



JUST A STONE-SKIP AWAY from the family cottage, the search for a legacy property was over. The site, featuring 105 feet of frontage on the Indian River in Port Carling, was introduced to Carol Conlin two-and-a-half years ago by sales representative **Thelma Jarvis from Johnston & Daniel Rushbrooke Realty, Brokerage.**

"It needed quite a lot of work, but she knew I would love it," recalls Carol. "I felt a calmness, a peacefulness here, the first time I set foot on the property and I could already visualize a nice home to be built."

Its appeal was more than a wise investment. "Our beautiful family cottage is on Lake Muskoka," Carol explains. "We are a blended family and I decided to search out a property as a legacy to my two daughters in advance of it becoming unaffordable here. And it proved to be a good time to do it."

Daughters Alexis and Erika had been coming to the area since 1995, forging life-long friendships, teaching swimming at the Beaumaris Yacht Club, and becoming well ensconced in the Muskoka lifestyle. Carol envisioned a legacy home for them that would blend iconic and traditional Muskoka cottage construction with some of her more contemporary ideas. After sourcing suppliers, builders, artists and tradespeople, she chose a primarily local team, well experienced in translating that "Muskoka feel." *Continued on page 39*



Simply Cottage furnished the living room with armchairs and custom-made sofas, coffee table and sideboard.



ABOVE: Randy Nickason Sr. of Fireplace King built the living room fireplace. **TOP RIGHT:** The cottage's front foyer offers a window-framed view of the river. **RIGHT:** Conveniently located off the foyer, a doorway provides easy access to the kitchen.



First on board was **Joshua Wassenaar**, owner of **From the Ground Up Construction**, who had built the family cottage on Lake Muskoka. He recommended architectural technologist **Tim vanKruistum** of **Muskoka Lumber Building Supplies Centre Ltd.** in Port Carling, who invited Carol to view a place he'd designed for his family on Lake Rosseau. She added her own input, significantly modifying and reducing the floor plan to 3,200 square feet.

"Carol worked with us to make sure the drawings were exactly what she was looking for," explains Joshua, a licensed carpenter. "From there it was really easy because she picked all of the finishes herself. Really, I didn't help her much with that at all. Carol knew exactly what she wanted and that was it – there was no guesswork."

She incorporated more and larger windows to offer a near-panoramic view of the river and Mirror Lake, added a Muskoka room and ensured that four of the five bedrooms had their own full en suite.

Thelma suggested the batten details on the bedroom ceilings as an affordable way to add interest and impact. "I wanted this cottage home to look 'of its time,' so some of the items I've chosen are timeless," Carol explains. "The less expensive, contemporary items are easily changed by the girls, down the road. The more significant items, because they're timeless, will last forever and won't need to be changed."

Quality pieces include the dining and great room chandelier fixtures and the wrought-iron exterior black coach lights, all custom-made by **Matt Church** of **The Artisan's Gallery Inc.** in Gravenhurst. *Continued on page 40*



feature

Durable Neue wide plank engineered oak from Nadurra Wood Corp. graces most of the floor surfaces throughout the home. Exceptions are the bathrooms, foyer and laundry room, where artistic porcelain tile from Metro Source is used in hexagonal, rectangular and square patterns. Flooring and tile sources were recommended by Alex Arnott Design. Carol took the tile samples to **Knowles Plumbing** to co-ordinate the bathroom fixtures, vanities and countertops.

The Valor H6 Series fireplace from **Fireplace King** is propane for ease of use. To add Muskoka warmth to it, Carol specifically chose the grey-black Muskoka stone around the fireplace and large hearth, done by **Randy Nickason Sr.**, just before he retired. "It's beautiful," she says.

"I wanted the house to flow with the same calmness I felt when I first set foot on the property," says Carol. "That's why I chose **Benjamin Moore's** Simply White throughout, with the kitchen island in soft Farrow and Ball grey."

The beautiful Calacatta Nuovo Caesarstone kitchen countertops crafted by **Woodsmiths of Muskoka** add a contemporary feel, but with the wood floors and metre-by-metre fresco-like tiles, there is still a Muskoka vibe. From just a few blocks away in downtown Port Carling, **Brown's Appliances** furnished the stainless steel kitchen equipment.

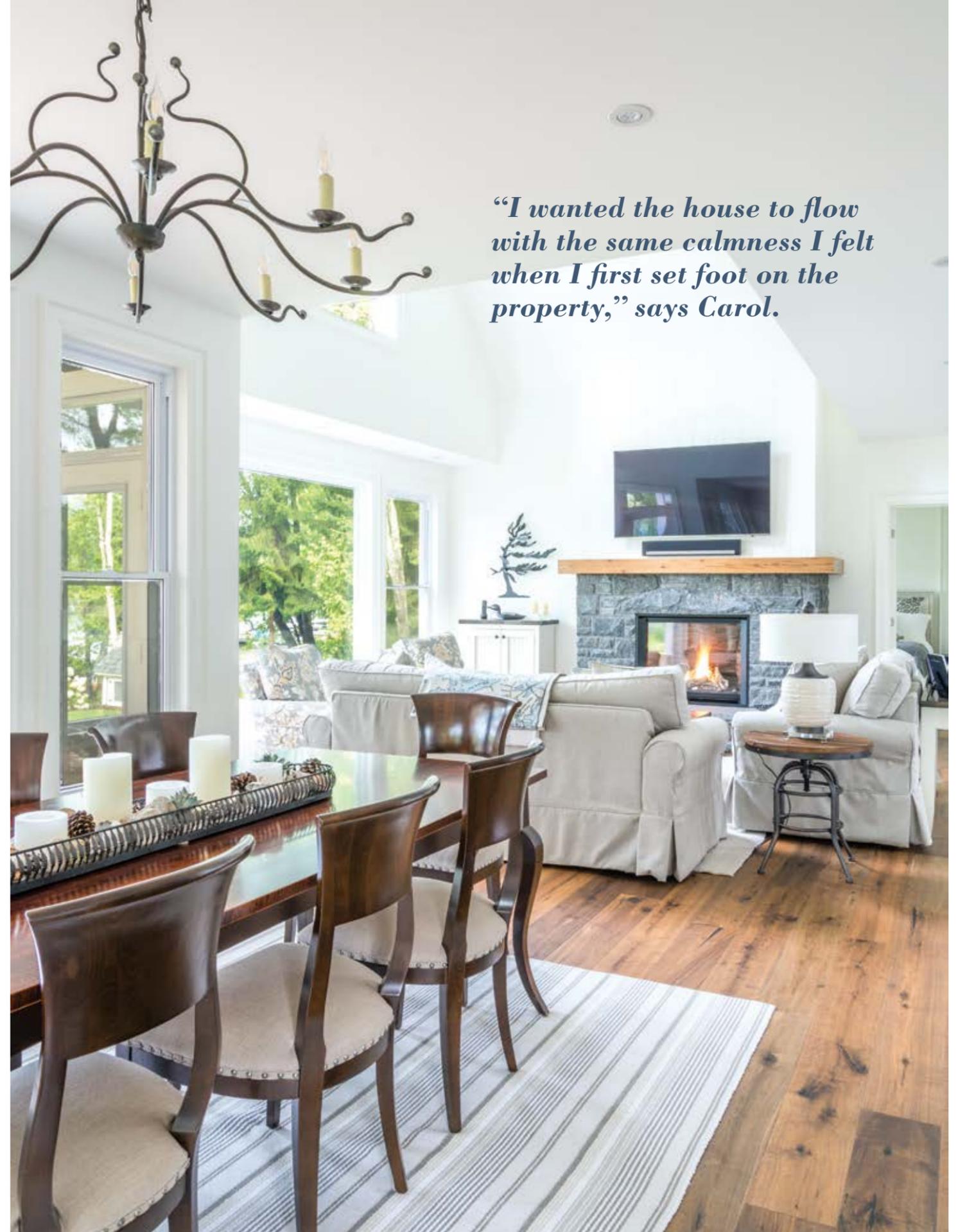
Carol chose simple shaker-style kitchen cupboards with contemporary hardware. In addition to the kitchen, Woodsmiths of Muskoka also designed and built the closet organizers, laundry cabinets and window boxes in the girls' bedrooms. "The window boxes are a wonderful timeless upgrade overlooking the water," says Carol.

Continued on page 44



TOP: A propane-fuelled fire table takes the chill off autumn air in the screened Muskoka room.

RIGHT: Large porcelain tiles form the colourful backsplash in the kitchen by Woodsmiths of Muskoka. **OPPOSITE:** Brass and pewter chandeliers made by The Artisan's Gallery Inc. illuminate the living room and dining room, where chairs around the dinner table were reupholstered by Steve Wegner Upholstery.



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feature



Cosy bed linens under a vaulted ceiling lend intimacy to the guest room over the garage.

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Furnished by Simply Cottage, the upper floor bedrooms are a calm oasis of comfort.



Karin Rogers and **Laura Smith** from **Simply Cottage** were extremely helpful with interior design choices, and measured spaces to ensure sofas, chairs, rugs, bedroom furniture and accessories fit nicely. "I spent hours with them choosing styles, fabrics and colours and they really made furnishing this place stress-less for me," Carol explains. Other accessories, rugs and linens were discovered at **Veranda** in Bracebridge, **Urban Rustic Living** in Huntsville, **Port Carling Woodworks** and **Muskoka Living** in Port Carling. **Masonsides Consultants Inc.** supplied blinds and shutters throughout the home.

In keeping with the tranquil flow to the exterior, Carol chose Benjamin Moore's Overcoat, a medium grey, with white trim to accent the Cape Cod siding. Painting was by **Jeanne Marshall** of **Decorative Finishes**. Two red doors in Benjamin Moore's Rapture, a cool tone red, suggested by Alex Arnott, mix nicely with the warm grey. *Continued on page 46*

ABOVE: Three of the four second-floor bedrooms each have an en suite bath, furnished and installed by Knowles Plumbing. **LEFT:** Custom-built window seats in bedroom dormers provide handy storage and a comfy perch for watching the river.



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ABOVE: A sliding door in the master bedroom opens to a private deck overlooking the yard and the river beyond. **RIGHT:** In the master bedroom en suite by Knowles Plumbing, matching sinks bookend a dressing table.

Jason Sinasac of TrueNorth Landscape Design & Development

created a landscaping plan that proved to be both simple and beautiful. “Everyone comments on the stone paths he made and the flow and continuity of trees, plants and river rock he incorporated,” Carol says.

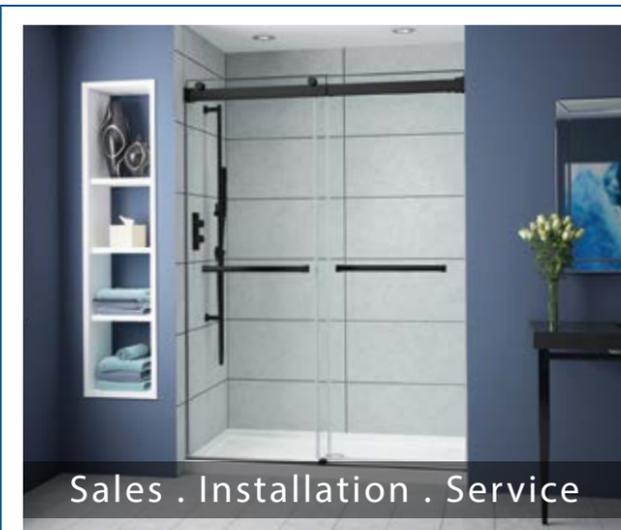
The modern outdoor black aluminum and glass railing supplied by **Wayne Parsons of Muskoka Aluminum & Vinyl** is very clean and simple, and seems to disappear from view, while serving its purpose. **Indian River Trading Company** provided outdoor furnishings.

Last fall, two smaller properties adjacent to Carol’s came up for sale. Again, Thelma Jarvis facilitated the purchase of these, one of which featured a small cottage. **David Dixon of David Dixon Carpentry** did a great job completely renovating this cottage, which Carol currently rents for the season to offset costs of renovating and furnishing. Her legacy project is complete. **OH**



LOCAL SOURCE GUIDE

- Brown’s Appliances • David Dixon Carpentry • Fireplace King
- From The Ground Up Construction • Indian River Trading Company
- Jeanne Marshall Decorative Finishes • Johnston & Daniel Rushbrooke Realty, Brokerage
- Knowles Plumbing
- Masonside Consultants • Muskoka Aluminum & Vinyl • Muskoka Living
- Muskoka Lumber Building Supplies Centre Ltd. • Muskoka River Tree & Property Care
- Norstar Aluminum Products Ltd. • Simply Cottage
- Steve Wegner Upholstery • The Artisan’s Gallery Inc. • The Stair Guy
- TrueNorth Landscape Design & Development
- Urban Rustic Living • Veranda • Woodsmiths of Muskoka



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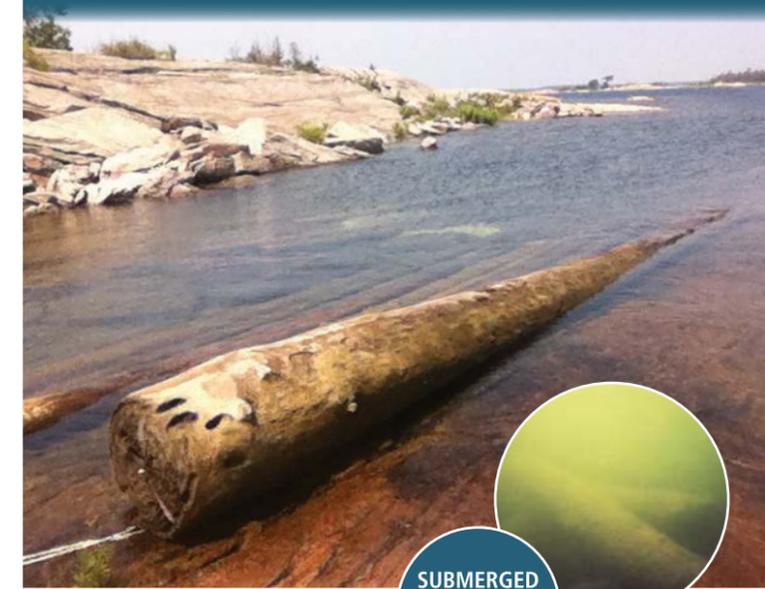
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