

outdoor spaces



This property has it all: privacy, a panoramic view and a landscape built for fun and relaxation.



3. *Rural Revival*
Located a third of a mile off the road, hidden from view without a neighbour within shouting distance, this home, located on a hilltop in Meaford, was landscaped by The Landmark Group to flow into the countryside. It's also the ideal place to have a summer garden party. The property is bordered by farmers' fields and one of the homeowners' favourite activities in their outdoor space is "farm watching."

The home was built by **Dave Harrington** of **Absolute Craftsmen**.

With "spectacular views, marvelous sunrises and sunsets, tons of critters and birds and copious amounts of peace and quiet," it was important that the homeowners felt comfortable in their outdoor space.

Landmark made sure of this, designing a variety of seating areas for use at different times of the day. Landmark's experts also designed and planted gardens and trees that are easily maintained and fit beautifully into this rural landscape. *Continued on page 68*

TOP STARTING FROM LEFT:

Tidy perennial gardens hug the screened-in porch.

A view of the pool and home from inside the cabana.

The Landmark crew brought this huge rock from the field and found the perfect place to show it off.

LOVING YOUR LANDSCAPE

BY JIM FOX // PHOTOGRAPHY BY SANDY MACKAY

It seems fitting that The Landmark Group, specializing in landscape design and construction, has been recognized by peers in the landscape industry by receiving six awards from Landscape Ontario for designs over the last three years. The company has certainly left its mark on the many properties it has transformed over the years.

According to Gary Nordeman, President and General Manager of The Landmark Group, hiring the best people is the key to his company achieving its fine reputation. "You've got to hire the right people with the right credentials," Nordeman says. "Knowing where to find these people is important. Landscape Ontario has been instrumental in this process. Through word of mouth and advertising, people express an interest in joining us and it also brings clients to our door." Established in 1986, Landmark currently has a staff of approximately 40 full-time employees. Nordeman attributes growth to the company's commitment to its employees. "I don't want those who work here to look at their contribution as a job, but as a career – something they can build a home and family on, he says."

What's important for Landmark's clients? Nordeman has a ready answer. "Entertainment! A lot of people are coming up to this area to retire or semi-retire. Many come to take advantage of four-season outdoor activities and stay for extended weekends – from Thursday to Monday. For that reason the most important thing is outdoor entertainment. When people come off the golf course or the ski hills they want to relax and entertain friends and family. They want to leave their work behind and embrace a more natural setting. That's where we come in."

Landmark has the experience, expertise and personnel to take their client's dream for the outdoors to the fullest and to turn it into reality. "There are so many things to consider," Nordeman says. "Everything from outdoor sound and lighting systems to privacy and the kind of spaces people want. The current trend is extending the time people can spend outdoors in a pleasing, well-designed setting. To achieve this, a lot of variables must be considered: shade, dining, water, privacy, unique focal points in the landscape, views, outdoor kitchen, etc.

The design of the space itself leads to other questions that can be answered by Landmark's in-house design team and group of consultants. Are stone walls or natural elements needed to keep out the prevailing wind and weather? How will spaces be tailored to suit the homeowner's lifestyle?

Because of the many questions to be answered, Nordeman feels people should get professional help with their landscaping projects. "Our qualified and experienced staff know the industry and what's available and can take a proactive role in answering homeowners' needs," Nordeman says. Landmark has the resources to take people through the necessary steps in any project – initial consultation, the collaborative setting of objectives, overall design, detailed planning and the development of budget/costing for client approval. This process, which develops a confident, trusting relationship with clients, ends with warranties and a firm commitment to after-service.

Nordeman summarizes it best. "We ask clients, 'what's your dream?' Based on their answer we have the know-how to create it for them with an eye for detail." ☺





With such wide-open space, the homeowners worked with Landmark to create a landscape design that would define the outdoor space without fencing it off or taking away from the farmland and openness of the 100-acre property. “We wanted the formal landscaped areas to blend into the very large hayfield, but at the same time feel like a defined space,” says the homeowner. A low rock wall capped in limestone surrounds the main patio and pool area and trees were planted to help block the high winds on the hilltop.

Stepping stones are laid just so, creating a meandering pathway from one garden and seating area to the next, including a pathway to the fire pit.

Of course many personal touches were incorporated into the design, including a large rock found on the property that now stands near the pool as a defining piece of landscape art.

“They showed a lot of creativity and had lots of good suggestions regarding materials and finishes,” says the homeowner of her positive experience with the “hardworking group” at Landmark. **OH**

Hardscapes, varying elevations, perennial gardens and pots with annuals work together, creating a magnificent outdoor space surrounded by farmland.



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