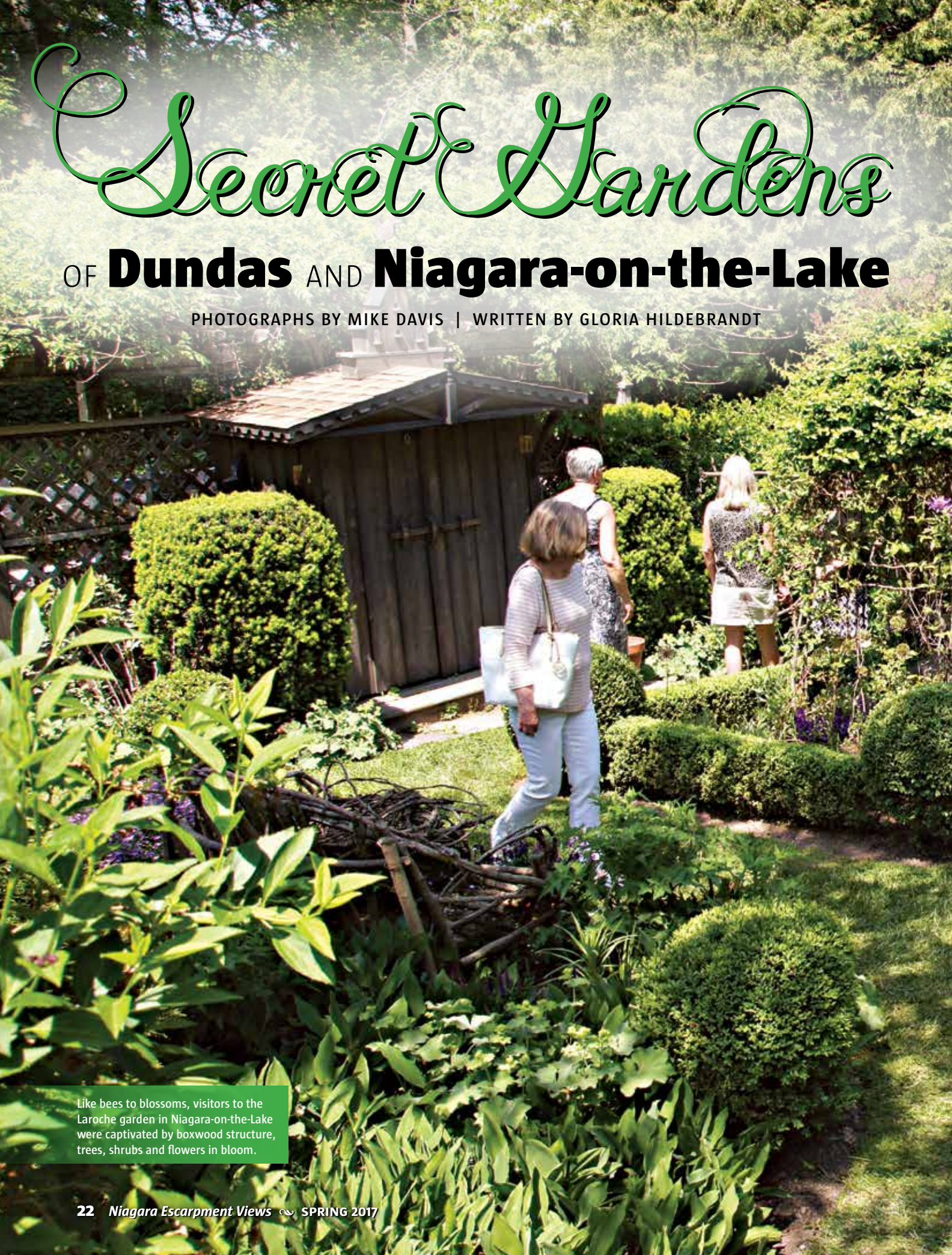


Secret Gardens

OF Dundas AND Niagara-on-the-Lake

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKE DAVIS | WRITTEN BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT



Like bees to blossoms, visitors to the Laroche garden in Niagara-on-the-Lake were captivated by boxwood structure, trees, shrubs and flowers in bloom.



A H, THE TYRANNY OF SPACE! There's never enough. Avid gardeners know the disappointment of not having enough room for all the plants they want. Similarly, we have more photographs of great gardens than we can fit into our spring special issue, and every good photograph is worth a full page or two. So many gardens, so little time to see them all in detail, so little space to do them justice in print. Here then is a highly personal selection of garden photographs from last year's tours in the Niagara Escarpment communities of Dundas and Niagara-on-the-Lake. One was called The Carnegie Gallery's Secret Gardens 2016 Tour; the other was Shaw Guild Garden Tour: The Secret Gardens of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Both are beautiful towns, both tours were fundraisers for a treasured part of their communities.





◀ The Penner property in Niagara-on-the-Lake featured a pond with a pergola reached by a boardwalk. The wisteria near the pergola was past its prime but the rich colours of potted lobelia and pelargonium, commonly known as geraniums, gave powerful punches of colour. Japanese influences make this courtyard unique.

◀ Niagara Escarpment cradles Hamilton, Ancaster and Dundas. The Howard back yard in Greensville ends at the north curve of the Escarpment, providing a spectacular year-round vista. Large beds of peonies, phlox, daylilies, roses and more punctuate the generous space.

LAST YEAR, dry spells continued to be a challenge. In some gardens the early flowers had just finished and

the mid or late spring flowers were not yet fully open. And pink seemed to be the prominent colour in bloom.

Some of the garden owners were on site and available to talk to visitors, enriching the garden experience. ▶



► The Greensville property of the Galers has a waterfaling stream flowing across the front yard. Perennial beds, rock gardens, bonsai'd junipers and trees surround the house. In the back near the pool, there's a beautiful "she-shed."



▼ On the 16-acre DiCenso/Hutchison property in Flamborough, the formal lawn and garden near the house blend gracefully into the forest and stream. This property is more fully explored elsewhere in this issue.





▲ Two stately flower-filled urns flanking the front door of the Smiths' Georgian house in Niagara-on-the-Lake reveal the taste, elegance and refinement of minimalism, which is enlarged in the clean lines of the lawn and garden beds of the back garden.



▲ Garden beds surround the indoor-outdoor space in the backyard of the Penman house in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Coneflowers and red Knockout roses repeat the pop of red on the seats while upstairs in the outdoor kitchen and dining area, a Provencal yellow predominates in the Lantana standard, annuals and tablecloth.

▼ The one-acre Turkstra property in Greenville seems much bigger due to the large lawn and garden on the lower level stretching up to a stream and woodland beyond. Art and found driftwood sculptures have been placed throughout.



▲ While the pergola and waterfall at the pool is the most dramatic feature of the McCaughey residence in Niagara-on-the-Lake, there is a densely planted garden beyond, with winding paths leading to a secret dining area hidden among the greenery.





▲ Closeup of a stunning Florida 'variegata' weigela in the Laroche garden in Niagara-on-the-Lake.



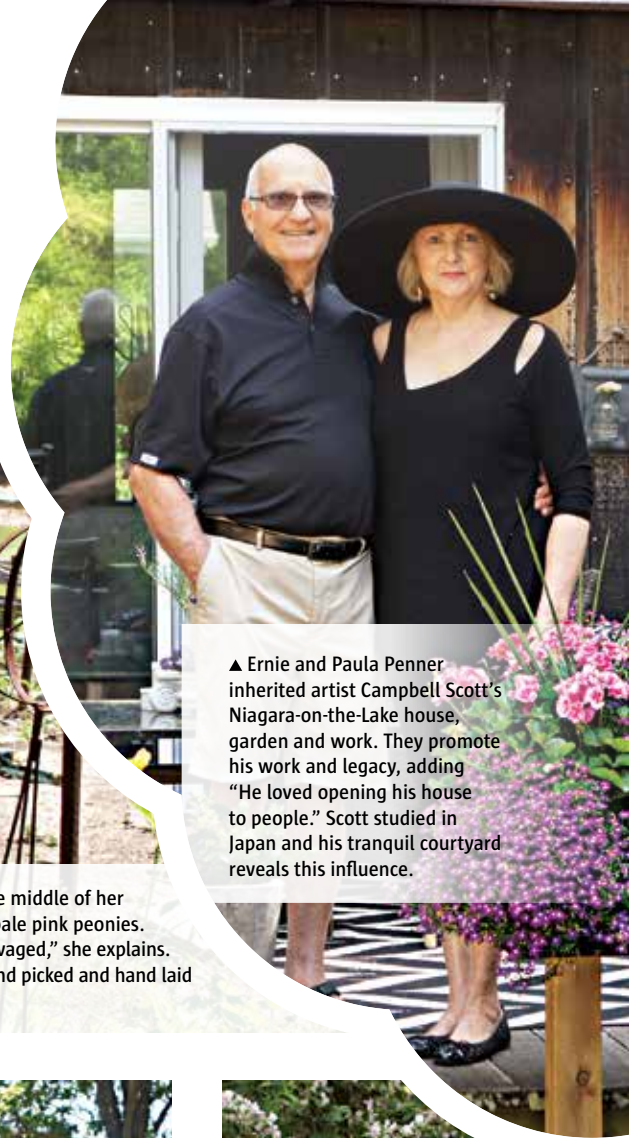
◀ A Florida dogwood in full bloom in a corner of the Thomas minimalist garden in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Garden Owners

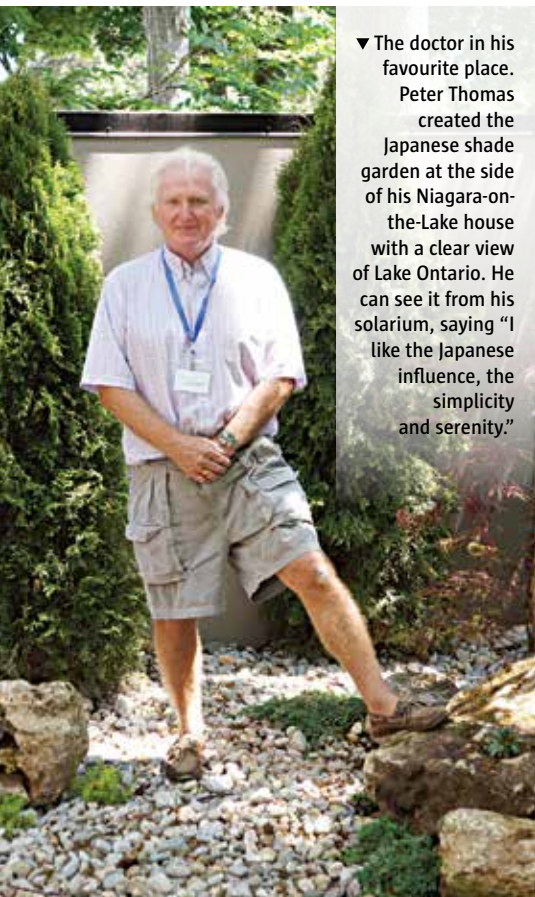
Meeting the owners and creators of the gardens on tour can be an added joy for fellow gardeners. Here are the ones who were available for photographs.



▲ Karen Turkstra created a shady resting place in the middle of her large lower-level garden. Art mimics life regarding pale pink peonies. "All the stuff in my garden was sourced locally or salvaged," she explains. "The driftwood was pulled from the stream, and I hand picked and hand laid the stones for the garden."



▲ Ernie and Paula Penner inherited artist Campbell Scott's Niagara-on-the-Lake house, garden and work. They promote his work and legacy, adding "He loved opening his house to people." Scott studied in Japan and his tranquil courtyard reveals this influence.



▼ The doctor in his favourite place. Peter Thomas created the Japanese shade garden at the side of his Niagara-on-the-Lake house with a clear view of Lake Ontario. He can see it from his solarium, saying "I like the Japanese influence, the simplicity and serenity."



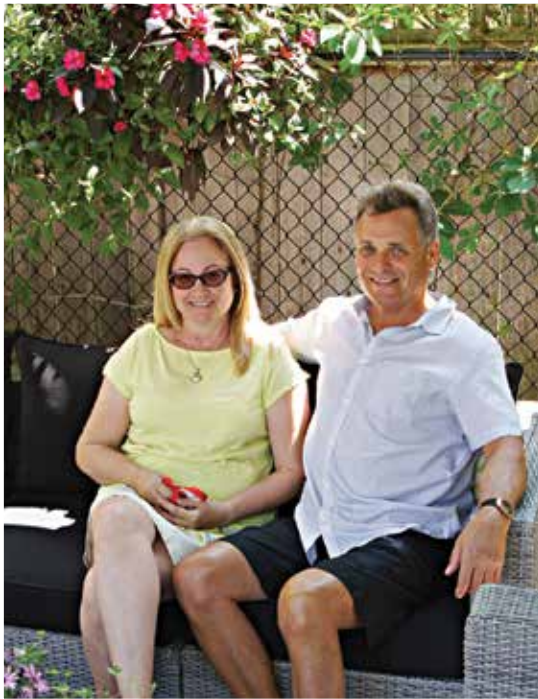
▲ Wayne and Sheri Galer have gardened on their Greenville property for about 34 years. A brother-in-law is a landscape designer.



▲ John and Ann Howard have both worked on their beautiful, mature Greenville gardens for 32 years. "There's a nice view in all seasons," they say modestly of their breathtaking Escarpment views.



◀ Alba DiCenso's Flamborough woodland garden is nestled within a 16-acre property. With husband Brian Hutchison, she is learning about and practising conservation. For more about this property, see the full feature article in this issue.



Birgit and Greg McCaughey bought the Niagara-on-the-Lake house with its existing lush garden about seven years ago, and continue to use the same gardener for maintenance as worked there previously. Birgit creates the planted pots for the garden. With its pool and waterfall, "It's very tranquil all the time," they say.

Overleaf: The Carnegie Gallery's Secret Gardens 2016 Tour included the garden of Haakon Bakken and Catherine Quinn. The spectacular view from their backyard takes in Dundas and the Escarpment beyond. **NEV**