



Landscaping project

a pleasure to look at all year 'round

By MARGARET HAYLOCK CAPON

After purchasing their new home on Elm Street, Ian and Antonia (Toni) Campbell discovered it was a “shady deal”. Their backyard did not receive enough sunlight, for a flower garden similar to the one they had left behind, at their previous home, in St. Eustache, Quebec.

“We wanted something to look out at. It was just lawn, except for a little bit at one end” says Toni, noting that they spend much of their time in the den, which overlooks the backyard.

“It is a shaded area, so there were limited possibilities.”

Newcomers to the area, the Campbells began to call local landscaping companies. They needed professional help to transform their back lawn, from grass to garden. Their search led to Jamie Cutler of Ray’s Power Equipment, who was just starting his landscaping business.

“We had several concepts. We wanted a pond and a patio in the backyard. Jamie suggested some plants and, also, gave us a catalogue of shade garden plants. We went with him to the nursery,



to pick them out,” says Toni.

“Jamie did all the planting. He’s very knowledgeable. He asked exactly how we wanted our pond and planned it.”

The Campbells’ den now overlooks a slate patio, flanked by a pond bordered by rocks, clumps of foliage, silver

feather grass and a collection of shade plants.

“There are a lot of hydrangeas, sedum, ferns and hostas,” Ian says.

Japanese Sedge, Solomon’s Seal, a Lace Leaf Eidelberg vine, Artemesia and Astilbe have been grouped to provide texture and colour, in the Campbells’ new shade garden. Also, adding to its beauty are a dwarf burning bush, a Kiwi bush, Japanese Painted Ferns, miniature irises and day lilies.

“It keeps changing colours, says Toni, observing that the garden offers special beauties, in each season.

Even in winter, it provides interesting contrast to a bleak landscape. Ornamental grasses stand tall and water in the pond continues to circulate. Several fish swim near the bottom, fiery accents of orange, against winter’s subdued palette.

“The rocks keep the pond nice and clear. There is no need to use a filter,” Ian says.

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Toni, whose studio, The Potter's Den, is located in the basement of her home, often uses her pots to add colourful accents to the garden. A few still remain outside, adding vivid splashes of colour, to the winter landscape.

"We have a lot of stone in the garden and the pots give colour. People can integrate them in their landscaping," she says.

A bookkeeper by profession, Toni says, since retiring in Prince Edward County, she has found time to become a serious potter. Her studio is open by chance and has been featured on the Prince Edward County Studio Tour. She displays her work at Covent Gardens, in Wellington and at Olivia and Co. Fine Used Books, in Picton. Several of her unusual "smoked fire" pieces are showcased at Covent Gardens.

"I've become a serious potter, since moving to the county. I have more time now," says Toni, who has been working in clay for approximately 25 years.

The Campbells discovered their new home by accident. Almost three years ago, they visited the county to visit a Wellington retirement development. Afterward, they decided to come to Picton for lunch. After seeing the town, the couple agreed that they wanted to make it their new home.

"We went to the Chamber of Commerce and then the real estate office," says Toni.

Ian observes that he had "a nice gar-



den" at their previous home in St. Eustache.

"The people who bought the house said that's what sold it," he recalls.

The couple's new home on Elm Street offered an opportunity for a different kind of garden, with an ornamental pond as its focal point.

"The pond is nice for people going by. They can enjoy it, too. Even the neighbourhood cats come to investigate it," says Toni.

The Campbells say Jamie Cutler helped them to transform their backyard, by working with its limitations.

Its shade now nurtures a colourful collection of plants that shun the sun. What appeared, initially, as a negative, became the inspiration for a beautiful garden.

"Jamie was here, when he said he would be, and the young men who worked for him were super. He said he would do the job and it would take a certain amount of time and that is how long it took," Toni says.

