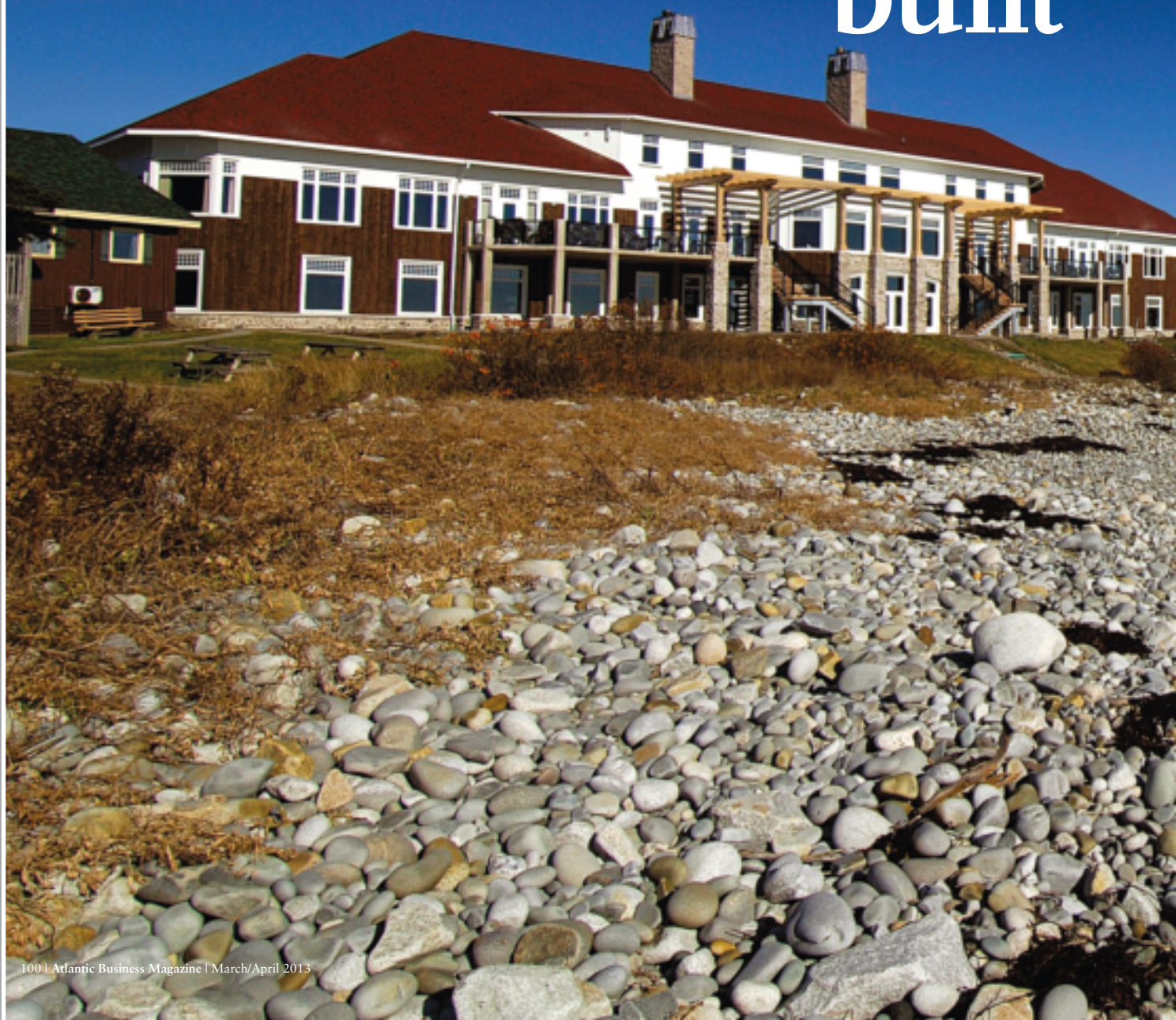


The lodge that Nova Scotia built



By Sarah Sawler

Main Lodge, White Point

When quilter Bev Crouse was asked to create a new White Point quilt, she had no idea she was taking on one of her most challenging and emotional projects yet. Like many Nova Scotians, Crouse had marked some important milestones at White Point Beach Resort, including birthdays, the launch of her business and her daughter's wedding reception. When she found out that White Point's main lodge had been destroyed by fire, it felt surreal. But despite her shock, Crouse distinctly remembers the flicker of an idea. "It was a fleeting visual," she explained. "Once I heard that the White Point lodge was gone, I had this vision that if a new quilt were to be made, the fireplace should be at the centre of it." So when Crouse was approached to lead the "Stitching White Pointers Together" project, she was happy to take on the challenge. While the architects, builders and designers were hard at work rebuilding the lodge, Crouse was busy engaging the public in the creation of a new iconic White Point quilt.

Crouse, in consultation with White Point staff, decided to take each individual block to various locations and have participants add one stitch each. The quilt was taken to the local fire hall, to the Halifax and Toronto Saltscapes Expos and to quilt guilds. At each event, as people added their stitches, they shared their White Point experiences. Whether they were former guests or had never heard of the resort prior to the event, Crouse heard over and over again, "When I go to White Point, I'm going to look for my stitch." The quilting project turned out to be an incredible community builder. Already, many of the people involved have gone to the resort to see their stitch. When the final product was revealed one year later at the "Quilt Unveiling", there was over a hundred people in attendance, many of them taking photos that would later be shared with the resort's online community of "White Pointers."

From selecting the fabric to designing the images, Crouse carefully planned every aspect of the quilt project, often going so far as to place the needle in the appropriate place for the more tentative quilters. While she worked closely with multiple generations of White Pointers to create a masterpiece that reflected the essence of the resort, Robert Risley, who owns the resort with his wife, Alicia, was just as focused and involved in the rebuilding of the lodge. He began by gathering an all-Nova Scotian design team, made up of WHW Architects, Lindsay Construction and Design 360, to work with his White Point management team. Driven by their determination to reopen White Point as soon as possible while maintaining a high level of quality and design, Risley led his team in a three-day exchange of ideas that resulted in the stunning, revitalized lodge that exists today.



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Their vision was of a White Point lodge that not only reflected the original building's relaxed and comfortable atmosphere, but also served as a physical representation of what Nova Scotia has to offer. Risley's hands-on approach and desire to showcase the best of Nova Scotia craftsmanship led them to approach local businesses first. Risley felt very strongly that they could achieve their goal of a high quality, speedy build using local businesses and products. And he was right—over 85 per cent of the lodge is anchored and appointed by Nova Scotia. “If there was anyone from the immediate area, that’s who we went after first,” explained Risley. “If there was no one, then we slowly expanded our distance until we found an individual or company that we felt could do the work.” They succeeded in their goal by incorporating the products and services of over a hundred Atlantic Canadian businesses—right down to the Craig Naugler folk art in the dining room and the handles on the conference room doors, which were created from a vintage boat cleat mold. Risley had seen similar door handles while travelling in the Bahamas and wanted to emulate the look. When he couldn’t find what he was looking for, he went to the Lunenburg Foundry, chose what he wanted from their archives and had them cast six bronze cleats.

According to the architect, Joe Zareski, they also tried to use as many natural materials as they could. “It’s likely that they built the original building from logs that they found on site,” he explained. “The concrete was probably made from the sand, the fireplace from the beach stones.” So, after obtaining the appropriate permits, they harvested stones from above the high water mark and hired Dover Masonry to incorporate the stones into soaring new fireplaces, accented by ironwork created by Steve’s Ironworks. After consulting with Amos Millwork, Zareski says they

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Founder's Lounge with soaring beachstone fireplace

incorporated swiss batten siding into the design in an effort to match the look of the surrounding cottages. Made from locally sourced wood, swiss batten creates a rustic, "sliced log" effect. "We didn't want to do something with the lodge that was too outlandish. We really wanted to incorporate it with the larger campus," Zareski says. With historic images of the resort scattered throughout the new building and a bar made from century-old timbers, the spirit of the original lodge has certainly been preserved. Even the colourful, mismatched dining room chairs, purchased locally from LakeCity Woodworkers, maintain the lodge's original cozy feel. But not quite everything is the same. While White Point's location, hospitality and service are still exceptional, the rebuild has provided the opportunity to make improvements as well. Sweeping views of the kilometre-long beach can now be enjoyed from anywhere in the fully-accessible lodge: the meeting rooms, Elliot's Dining Room, the pool, the fitness centre and the Crow's Nest.

Zareski had a good idea of how the rebuilt lodge would need to feel—he's been a guest at the lodge for as long as he can remember. He has distinct childhood memories of building sandcastles on the beach and playing on the rocks, pretending they were sinking ships. His honeymoon was at White Point. And when he and his wife started their family, they introduced their own children to the trails and bonfires. "It's been great to learn about how different people use White Point for different events," he says "It's really a home away from home for a lot of people." And he's right—according to Risley, many White Point guests have even become familiar with the dining room staff who have served them from the expertly-crafted White Point menu, year after year.

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White Point management didn't leave their staff or their guests without their home away from home for long. They even showed their commitment by setting a public goal—to be open in time to host events during Nova Scotia Music Week. With seven million dollars, a lot of determination and the support of Nova Scotian experts behind them, they met that goal by rebuilding the lodge in only seven months.

The rebuild was a wonderful demonstration of how many people have been impacted by White Point over the years. And by sharing the experience online via webcam, videos and social media, White Pointers were given the opportunity to contribute their ideas. These suggestions were not only incorporated into the design of the lodge, but also the quilt, which is representative of the White Point essence, as well as the collaborative efforts and support of White Point's extended family. With the rebuilding of "the lodge that Nova Scotia built", the revitalized resort is ready for another eight decades of gatherings, vacations and memories on Nova Scotia's South Shore. • www.whitepoint.com

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When fire destroyed the White Point Resort main lodge last year, Nova Scotians were devastated. Almost every one of us has been touched by White Point's unique beauty and serenity. Every one of us wanted to believe the resort's essential spirit would live on.

It does. WHW Architects is honoured to be part of the team of local craftspeople, designers, and builders who helped recapture that spirit in the new main lodge.

The team has put the very best of Nova Scotia into the new space. Only the best memories will be made from it.

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