



# Ottawa Renovates

**2016  
RENOVATION  
AWARD  
WINNERS**

**plus**

**DESIGNER OF THE YEAR  
RENOVATOR OF THE YEAR**

**and**

**The ultimate renovation:**  
Preserving history

**Showroom profile:**  
Spectrum Kitchens

**Renovator profile:**  
Sandy Hill Construction

**Corporate profile:**  
Laurysen Kitchens

Cover photo  
LAURYSÉN KITCHENS  
Photo:  
METROPOLIS STUDIOS



## RENOVATOR PROFILE



# Building on tradition

By Francie Healy

*Nathan Gurnham and Serena Brownrigg-Gurnham, new co-owners of Sandy Hill Construction in Ottawa, make a formidable team.*

For more than 10 years before they bought the company, Nathan worked for its former owner, John Wenuk. He was the company's crew chief for eight of those years. Clients knew and trusted him and his crew.

Serena was born and raised in Ottawa and lived in Vancouver for 10 years. Prior to

becoming owner with Nathan, she worked elsewhere as a legal assistant and assisted in drawing up contracts. With their combined skills, it's a great balance.

They live in Sandy Hill, and it's a busy time for them, because in addition to their company responsibilities, they have a nine-year-old daughter, Jada. They often work seven days a week, but they've learned how to juggle their time.

Under former owner John Wenuk, Sandy

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## RENOVATOR PROFILE



# Building on tradition

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Hill Construction has had a long, solid reputation as a quality company that does interior and exterior renovations, heritage restorations, and structural work.

It also has the advantage of years of work by Nathan and his crew in countless homes in the Ottawa area. The crew consists of four full-time carpenters and proven, trusted, sub trades.

“We’ve built relationships with our clients,” Nathan says of himself and John Wenuk. “A lot of them come back to us. “We build quality renovations that last, and they know that.”

Along with his work on renovation sites each day, Nathan is also the person new and repeat clients speak to. That works well, because the repeat clients already know him, and word gets around to new potential clients.

“John Wenuk built a reputable company,” Nathan says. “It has been an easy transition, because the clients know the work, and they know me.”

It’s simple for the clients, too, because Sandy Hill Construction schedules it “so we’re not running back and forth between jobs”, Nathan explains. “We dedicate ourselves to one project at a time. Renovation can be disruptive, so we try to make it as easy as possible.”

Nathan grew up in Nova Scotia and started in the construction industry when he was young. His father was a woodworking teacher. He built his first home for a friend of his father’s when he was only 16. Then, during the summers, he built custom homes for many different clients who had bought property on islands in the province.



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Sandy Hill Construction has always been involved in humanitarian efforts: The Shepherds of Good Hope, and also Canadians Sharing Locally and Globally (founded and run by John and Cathy Wenuk). Nathan and Serena continue to support these charities.

They took over the business July 31, 2016, after months of preparation.

“The more we work at it, the more rewarding it becomes,” says Serena.

It’s exciting – but not really all that new – to Nathan.

“I’ve been in this business for a long time,” he says. “It’s just a matter of putting on the owner’s hat.”