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Rooted from the Heart

For Shayne Sibley and her dedicated team at Chatham's Bedworks Design, Inc., a garden or a landscape is an opportunity for a bright and blooming future.

By Julie Craven Wagner | Photos by Mike Crane







"To plant a garden is to dream of tomorrow."

~Audrey Hepburn

For Shayne Sibley, (née Watson) her dreams of tomorrow haven't always been a bed of blooms. The accomplished and creative founder of Bedworks Design, Inc. based in Chatham, along with her husband and co-principal John, greets each day as a well-cultivated rose greets the sun each morning. With as many projects and demands as a rose has buds, she and her team set about making the lower Cape an even more beautiful place to live for some astute and selective homeowners. Yet, Sibley's days weren't always filled with sunshine and verdant landscapes.

Growing up in Eastham, the love of the Cape is in her roots, and an intuitive understanding of the unique environment found in this region—like the inlets prevalent across the region—the Cape's salty, wet, windswept breezes run through her veins. Pursuing pre-law as an undergraduate student, she was focused on building a life that was largely unaffected by the whims of the natural world. In her late twenties she found herself a single mother of twin boys, living and working on the Outer Cape, and as she says, "It became an issue of need, and then desire; and how to balance



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those two. I needed to start a business where I could control the hours when I worked since finding and affording daycare for two boys wasn't an option. So, I had to ask myself, 'What can I offer? What kind of business will thrive here? And what am I good at?' I came up with a gardening business."

The image of Sibley working out of her Toyota Corolla where she would throw bags of deadheads into the trunk after a client clean-up session, and an endless trail of dirt and sand, as she was in and out of the driver's seat countless times a day, as she made the most of the daylight hours, is as inspiring as any conversation with the intrepid entrepreneur.

Probably due to her extremely likable nature, Sibley's client base grew organically (like her gardens) from referrals and



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admiration expressed and shared from passersby who would stop and consider the thoughtful gardens she had created for her clients. From the beginning, Sibley considers herself fortunate (more likely it was her talents at play) to have been given the opportunity to be the gardener on site at a few local grand estates. Sibley indicates her preference and subtle affirmation when being referred to as a gardener, a trait shared by most of the members of her team. Understandably, the reference as a landscaper is a much broader characterization—despite the overlap of responsibilities—yet the nuance of the care, background and expertise inherent to a fine gardener is a subtle distinction that sets the work available





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through Bedworks Design apart. "It's funny," she reflects, "when I talk to people, I call myself a gardener. I remember years ago, when I first started out, somebody asked me what I did, I said, 'I'm just a gardener.' I checked myself, and I noticed they stopped short as well. I think having the traditional expectation from my youth—you know go to college, get a degree, find a good job—there was something that made me think being a gardener was less than all of that. But with the experiences and opportunities this career path has given me, it couldn't be farther from the truth. And most importantly, I am happy."

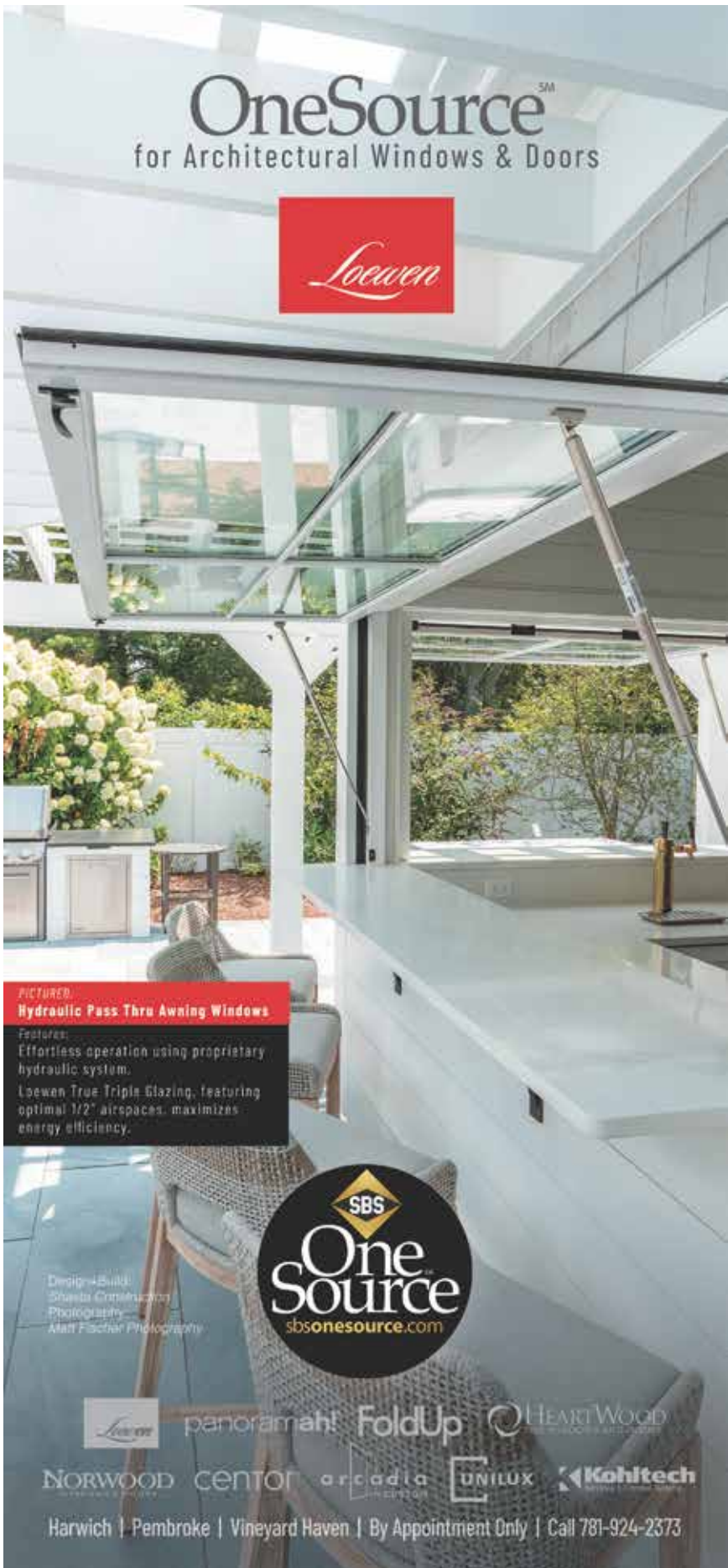
Sibley's internal contentment must be the fuel that influences her horticultural endeavors since her gardens seem to dance with delight at each of her clients' homes. Today, she



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leans into acknowledging her love and passion for the world of horticulture. As she started to develop her business, Sibley, who has always understood and valued the hard work of earning advanced degrees, returned to school to study landscape design at Harvard University's Landscape Institute program in conjunction with Arnold Arboretum. "We hire many people who have also been drawn to the field of horticulture and do fine gardening. It makes for a vibrant team where we share and learn every day, especially since there is always so much to learn."

Sibley's love of flowers and their endless varieties is deep, yet if forced to choose just one species to spend the rest of her life, like the prince in Antoine de Saint Exupery's charming



novel *Le Petit Prince*, Sibley would spend the rest of her days on an uninhabited planet with only a rose for company and still be content. “Why do I love a rose? Well, they are difficult to grow, and I love a good challenge. And if you understand them, they will bloom in December. My father was really passionate about roses; helping him take care of his roses was one of my jobs as a child, so that probably inspired me to appreciate them as well. If I had to narrow down which roses I love most, it would be English roses, specifically the David Austin roses,” she shares. A recent trip to England to specifically visit the David Austin Rosarium allowed the Sibleys to spend several days there and glean new knowledge as well as make new contacts.



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For Sibley's clients that also appreciate roses, they always seem to find their way into their gardens in uniquely curated designs. And for those whose aesthetic is more restrained or otherwise defined, Sibley's careful interpretation of her clients' vision usually results in equally creative execution. "I'm unbelievably lucky to have personal relationships with all of my clients," she shares. "People who hire us care in many of the same ways we do, that is why we make this kind of commitment to each other. For my team, the commitment is to provide the best landscape and garden for the client that is imaginable. For our clients, it is a willingness to embark on this journey with us. It is a relationship in the truest sense of the word."

Today Bedworks Design is the outcome of 23 years in the making, and those twin boys who have been with her since the start are now young men, post-college and living independently. Sibley holds a special place in her heart for her mother, now deceased, who was an undeniable inspiration, and by her side for so many of the early Bedworks Design years, thus making it all possible.

Sibley may cite luck as an element in her success, but at the core is her passion coupled with her inimitable knowledge and intuition. She and her team truly make their clients' dreams of tomorrow a blooming reality.

Be sure to enjoy more of the talented work attributed to Bedworks Design, Inc. in upcoming issues of *Cape Cod HOME* this year. 🏡

Julie Craven Wagner is the editor of Cape Cod HOME.



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