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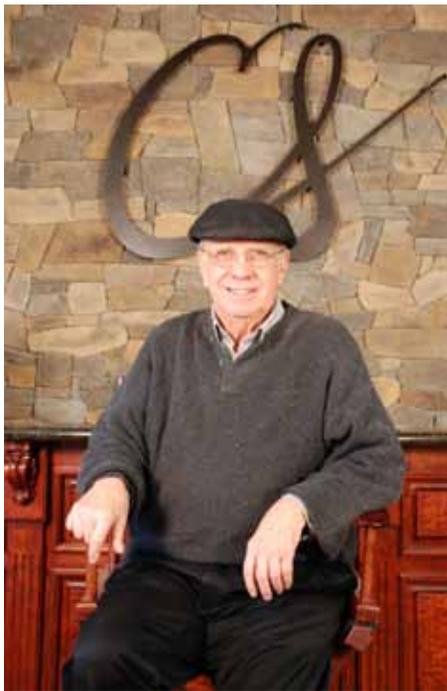
GREATNESS

IN THE

DETAILS

WAYNE HARDISON'S DELIGHTFUL DESIGNS

BY DOMINIQUE MCKAY



Wayne Hardison, a Lynchburg native, has been designing buildings and residences in the local area for over 30 years.
Photo courtesy of Custom Structures

Behind the scenes of every building structure stands an architect with a pencil and a lasting artistic vision. For over 30 years, architect Wayne Hardison, a native of Lynchburg, has taken on that role of conceptualizing designs that cater to the needs and aesthetics of his city's residents and companies.

"I've always wanted to be an architect from the time I was a child, about 10 years old," Hardison said.

He developed a strong interest in the trade of architecture after seeing blueprints and drawings from an architect who worked with his brother-in-law.

"I got interested after seeing those and looking at them thinking to myself, 'Hey that's something kind of interesting,'" he recalled.

Born in Lynchburg on May 3, 1935, Hardison attended E.C. Glass High School before being accepted to the architecture program at the University of Virginia (UVA). After attending UVA, he served in the U.S. Army for two years and returned to Lynchburg where he began working as an apprentice under two local architects, Carl Cress and Willard Rhodes.

In the 1960s, Hardison was busy learning the tools of his trade when he met his biggest mentor and aesthetic influence, Harrison Trueheart Poston—who was known to many as "Trueheart." ▶▶



The Bank of the James building (above) and The Galleria downtown (next page) are just two examples of Hardison's architectural feats.

"We all knew [Trueheart] was an extraordinary talent," Hardison said. "He was highly influential on me and several others in design—particularly in the traditional elements of design."

Hardison said Trueheart was an inspiration because he could do both modern and traditional designs. He knew the traditional architecture of colonial Virginia and was highly educated and knowledgeable about the history of design. Spending his late evenings at Poston's apartment, Hardison would discuss and brainstorm ideas for design and architecture as his love for architecture continued to grow.

In 1972, Hardison passed the Architect Registration Exam and began working for Wiley|Wilson. Seven years later in 1979, he and a college friend named Gordon Harrison opened up their own firm, Harrison & Hardison, Architects, and together they embarked on a new adventure that would span the next 30 years of Hardison's career.

Through the years, he has worked on a variety of local structures including The Galleria in downtown Lynchburg, Centra's corporate headquarters and various residential homes and churches, including the Amelon United Methodist Church in Madison Heights.

Hardison said his aesthetic reflects a combination of contemporary thought and function with traditional design elements. He does not allow the designs to be slavishly one extreme or the other, but heavily takes into consideration Lynchburg's more traditional aesthetics.

"I like it all myself. I read the magazines and I love some of the modern aesthetic—it's highly satisfactory in many, many ways. I understand it, but it's just not as practical from the standpoint of [Lynchburg]," he said.

Hardison said he's also seen a number of technological changes through the years in his industry, but finds that art remains a central part of the world of architecture and design.

"Any architect has to be visually oriented. They can see in their mind's eye what they want to have happen and how they want it to look," he said.

Hardison was always a lover of art and hand drawing and developed his talent through the years. While he was in school, this was not only a necessity of those in architecture but also a thing to be admired.

"It was expected of all the architects at that time to be able to draw. We had art classes taught by artists," he said. "The professors that you admired could draw ... they were able to make buildings look like photographs."

Today, Hardison believes this type of art, although not as integral, is still a valued talent of the profession.

"There are architects who have grown up in the computer age, but can still do hand drawings, it's just not as much a necessity as when we were coming along," he said. "It hasn't completely gone away though."

But with the advances in technology, Hardison says today's architects do have the capability to achieve designs and structures that were only imaginable before computers.

"Certainly there are things they are doing now that could not have been done without computers," he said referencing world-renowned architect Frank Gehry's international masterpieces. "They might have been able



to be thought of, but I don't see how they could have been built without computers."

For Hardison, the technological advances have been a welcomed change, making the work easier and faster to accomplish.

"The medium you use to produce something always has an influence on what you produce—whether good or bad," he said. "I don't think the effect has been bad, I think it's been ultimately good."

In March of 2011, Hardison began working as the senior architect for the design division of Custom Structures, bringing with him his talent of hand drawing and years of experience.

"We acquired drawings from his past projects and just going through and looking at all his hand drawings ... they're literally works of art," Scott Elliott, president and general contractor of Custom Structures, said.

These days, Hardison's design tab is filled with plans for various local churches, financial institutions and residential homes. Through it all, he says the successes were in large part because of the clients.

"I'm very happy with my career and I've been blessed in many ways. I've met a great number of clients I can still call friends," he said. "An architect's success depends upon his clients. If you have good clients ... you'll have good projects and be able to produce good work."

Hardison now resides in Roanoke, and commutes to Lynchburg several times a week for work at Custom Structures.

"He'll be known as one of the great architects of Lynchburg one day," Elliott said of Hardison. "I think he already has that rapport now. His versatility and the detail he puts in a project really show what an artist he is." **LB**



ARE “GREEN” HOMES SELLABLE?

BY SUZANNE RAMSEY

It used to be, if someone said, “I’m building a green house,” the response they were likely to get went something like this: “What are you going to grow in it? Tomatoes?”

Nowadays, however, with “green” being synonymous with energy-efficient and Earth-friendly, a place to grow tomatoes—tasty as they might be—may not be the building they’re talking about.

Some local real estate agents say they’ve seen an increased interest in energy-efficient, green homes that feature things such as on-demand water heaters, sustainable materials like bamboo flooring and cisterns that collect water for flushing toilets, washing cars and watering lawns. Some of these homes are certified by third-party rating programs, like EarthCraft Virginia, a green-building certification process that, according to its website, “serves as a blueprint for healthy, comfortable homes that reduce utility bills and protect the environment.”

Others simply have features aimed at saving money or reducing one’s “carbon footprint,” a term commonly used to describe the negative effect an individual has on the environment based on energy consumption and other factors.

Local real estate agent, Robert Dawson, says most of the inquiries he gets about green homes come from engineers moving into town for jobs at AREVA, Harris Corporation and other firms.

“They ask where the green neighborhoods are, what green neighborhoods are available,” he said. “Typically, it’s a couple of times a month, not a great deal, but it’s all relative. It depends on the number of transferees coming in from out-of-town.”

One such green neighborhood is Great Oaks in the New London area of Bedford County. It bills itself as the “first eco-friendly community in the area.” The homes, starting in the low \$200,000s, are built according to EarthCraft standards.

According to Tina Friar, a real estate agent who markets Great Oaks, the EarthCraft rating system is based on points. Points are given for things like insulation, heating and cooling systems, using local vendors, and even how the house is situated on the lot. A house that faces the South is preferable because it takes advantage of “passive solar” energy.

“It’s doable,” Friar said. “It’s not a crazy, off-the-charts, zero-off-the-grid kind of thing. It’s very achievable.”

Friar’s husband, a local contractor, built an EarthCraft-certified home in Great Oaks that includes a heat pump with a SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio) rating of 25. The higher the SEER rating, the less energy is required to run the heat pump. Building codes require only a rating of SEER 13, Friar said.

“That’s kind of a big deal for builders on a spec house to step out of the box and do those things. It’s a little more expensive. You have to educate the public on them,” she explained.

Jessica Freihaut, a sales associate with United Country/Jim Nolen Real Estate in Appomattox, said she also has seen an increase in the number of prospective buyers who want green homes, particularly retirees buying land in the 10-county area that United Country serves.

“We have had more people in our area ... who buy land for retirement and when they build, they do a custom build,” she said. “They want to build with green principles, as far as the direction [the house] is facing—the south-facing exposure—the spray-foam insulation and the upgrades to make it more energy efficient. I’m definitely seeing an increase in that trend.”

Freihaut recently sold her first EarthCraft Platinum-certified home. The Platinum rating is EarthCraft’s highest. The 2,087-square-foot home, built by Custom Structures, is in the Sunset Ridge subdivision in Concord.

Custom Structures, based in Lynchburg, has been in the green-building business for three years. They also market a line of pre-designed, energy-



The Edinburgh home plan was one of the first “Next Generation” homes Custom Structures built and sold locally. Photo courtesy of Custom Structures

efficient homes. At first glance, the homes—in Craftsman, Tidewater, Colonial and other traditional styles—don’t look all that green.

“The great thing about making a house green [is] it doesn’t have to look like a spaceship like people think,” Scott Elliott, Custom Structures’ president, said. “It actually looks the same as any other house.”

Custom Structures is currently building a home in the Boonsboro area for Nancy Hardison and her family. While not EarthCraft certified, the home will have many Earth-friendly and energy-saving features.

The plans include an on-demand water heater with solar backup, in which water-filled tubes on the roof are heated by the sun, reducing the workload on the water heater, and a geothermal heating system. In addition, radiant floor heat and insulated concrete form (ICF) walls will reduce heating and cooling costs.

Hardison said the decision to go green was driven by her concerns for the environment and frugality. She said they considered solar panels and she “desperately wanted a wind turbine,” but neither was cost-effective.

“It would take 30 years to recoup that money with the kind of sun we get in Virginia,” she said, referring to solar panels. “We did do a lot of those kinds of cost analyses.”

Billy Flint, with Flint Property Group, said while his business hasn’t seen a lot of requests for green homes, he thinks public interest is on the rise.

“Little things like on-demand water heaters seem to be catching on,” he said. “More builders today are installing them, even though it’s more expensive than a tank system. I don’t think we’re at a tipping point yet, but builders and the public and Realtors are getting it.” **LB**



Added luxuries in a green home might include solar tubes, like the ones shown here cut out of the floor, and a reverse chiller system. Photos courtesy of Custom Structures.





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