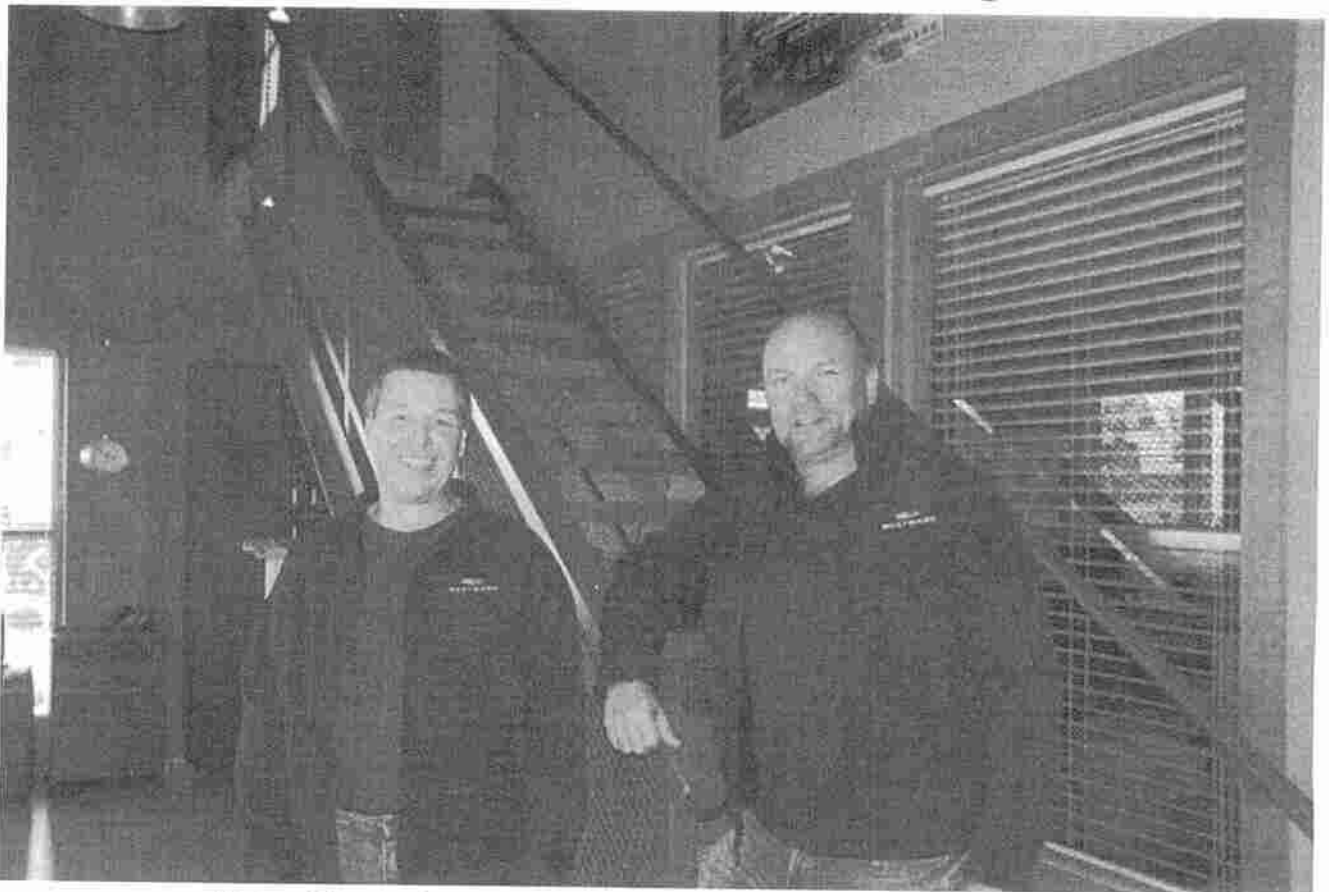


Westmark making its mark in Georgie Awards



Westmark Construction Ltd. Project Manager Eldon Bueckert, left, and owner Chris Lundy

By Guody Niosi Writer

NANAIMO - Since its inception in 1988 Westmark Construction Ltd. has won more than two dozen Silver CARE awards presented by the Canadian Home Builders Association and about 10 Gold Awards including the coveted *People's Choice Award* one year for a project in Lantzville.

Company owner Chris Lundy says the *People's Choice Award* was especially gratifying because it is voted on by the public on Vancouver Island.

This year Westmark Con-

struction is a finalist for four Gold CARE Awards in the categories:

- Best Single Family Home \$1 Million - \$1.5 Million.
- Best Kitchen 225 - 250 square feet
- Best Ensuite Bathroom 125 - 175 square feet
- Best Ensuite Bathroom over 175 square feet.

The mid-island home nominated in the first category is already the subject of a feature home article in the Vancouver Island glossy *Homes & Living* magazine. Lundy allows that the home is certainly exceptional.

At 4,800 square feet it offers magnificent living spaces focussed to take advantage of its waterfront location. Where other builders might have seen the granite outcropping the home is built on as a detriment, Lundy and his team saw the advantages and built the home to adapt to the contours of the land.

The home was also designed to let the outside in with NanaWall windows that fold back to open the house as much as possible to nature. The outdoors is also brought in by materials used in the house such as coastal cedar and fir.

Basalt tile floors feature in-floor radiant heating throughout the house while the basement floor slab is acid etched. The home also features a wine cellar surrounded by glass and a graceful open staircase.

"The house was carefully designed to capture the light and the movement of the sun throughout the day," Lundy explains, noting that patios around the house take advantage of the sun's movement. A western facing patio, for instance, features an outdoor fireplace to warm the area as the daylight wanes.

Like many of Westmark's

clients, the owners of the home came to the company by referral - and like other

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Westmark Construction Ltd.: 10 gold Georgies

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clients, they experienced the meticulous construction process Westmark is known for.

"We typically meet with them and discuss the project," Lundy says. "We talk about the objectives and the process. Moving forward, we start the design and, of course, the design is cus-



Lundy says that the two ensuite bathrooms entered in this year's CARE Awards are truly outstanding. He calls them "retreats."

In one case a shower features decorative glass with a West Coast motif. The soaker tub is set in front of a NanaWall window that folds back to give the bather the experience of being in nature while still enjoying the comforts of the luxurious bathroom.

Both ensuite bathrooms feature heated floors and towel racks. One bathroom offers a free standing soaker

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tom." Westmark provides a design/build service and also works with architectural plans the client provides. When the design is finalized, the conversation turns to specs, scheduling and permitting. Lundy points out that the industry has changed in recent years, making it more efficient for both builders and clients.

Most documents today are relayed by email as PDF files. Lundy also says that it is now much easier to deal with out-of-town clients who can stay informed with photos taken on site. He cites the case of recent out-of-town clients who only had to come to the site twice during the entire



Westmark Construction Ltd.'s award winning work

process.

The construction process can surprise customers, Lundy says. There are many arduous demands to the process and a plethora of decisions that have to be made almost every step of the way.

"We have some in-house design that we offer," Lundy says. "And people may want to work with other designers. And certainly, every project has its share of challenges to overcome but we are skilled at resolving the inevitable challenges that occur on projects."

tub that the rest of the room is built around.

While all the entries in this year's awards are outstanding, Lundy says he can't take full credit for their exceptional quality.

"I like to credit the clients and designers," he says. "We're essentially creative and skilled constructors. It's really important for the architectural designer, the interior designer and the client to have a great vision. Then we

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Westmark Construction Ltd.'s award winning work

provide our experience to the process, if we think we can improve something. We're actively engaged in trying to improve conditions."

Lundy has been working to create better buildings for many years. He grew up in the building trades and

grounded himself in a business education. In 1988, he was working for a building contractor when he decided to strike out on his own.

"I just decided one day that I would do a better job of being that building contractor," he says.

He's been doing a better job ever since. His company grew by a series of gradual steps.

"It was about gaining knowledge along the way and increasing our client list over the years," he says.

Today Westmark Con-

struction Ltd. is known for residential and commercial projects as well as smaller developments.

"We have an excellent team of people who have been with the company a long time," Lundy says. "Some have been with the company in excess of 10 years. We also apprentice our carpenters and retain them."

"My experience is that it's not so much about meeting goals as it is about adapting your business to the way the industry changes - and it continues to change rapidly."

He notes that perhaps never before have there been so many new products and new and improved building techniques. Market demands also have a history of changing and successful companies are in tune with those demands and adapt to them.

Lundy notes that Westmark Construction is in a growth stage.

"We think that the mid-island region has a strong future for the industry," he says. "We anticipate that the City of Nanaimo will continue to evolve and support good projects for the community."

He credits local suppliers and trades for the continued success of the company.

"They're always an integral part of the excellent outcome of any of our projects," he says. He also says that the CARE Awards foster excellence. "We take the time to enter them as often as we can. They provide a gauge to assess how our projects compare to other projects on Vancouver Island."

Westmark Construction Ltd. is at 2535 McCullough Road in Nanaimo.

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