



(left) Jamison Howard with the late Max Crosby, founder of Max G. Crosby Construction Company (above) The exterior of one of Jamison's latest projects, the Daniel Island home of Susan and Robert Wall

great expectations

Carrying on the legacy of the company's founder, builder Jamison Howard moves Max Crosby Construction Company forward with high hopes for the future.

As a local attorney, Susan Wall spends long hours in the courtroom and even longer hours at her downtown office. So when she and her husband Robert—a local oncologist—came across the opportunity to build their first custom residence on Daniel Island, it was no case of conjecture that the busy legal maven craved her own refuge from the stresses of the day. After due diligence researching prominent Lowcountry builders, Susan settled assertively on Max G. Crosby Construction Company to help achieve her vision of their Daniel Island dream home.

"It's certainly true that I had a definite picture of where I wanted to be at the end of the project," says Susan. "The Max Crosby group

displayed a can-do attitude from the start; they were very positive about my vision and that they could make it happen." Paired with Jamison Howard, one of the company's partners, Susan and Robert embarked on their inaugural journey of building a home from scratch...a process that, as many first-time buyers or builders can attest to, can be overwhelming at best. However, fledgling Susan found comfort in the laid-back breed of confidence exhibited by Jamison. "Since it was our first time with this sort of experience, I was pleasantly surprised that I enjoyed the process from beginning to end," she explains. "I think that was due in large part to the fact that Jamison and his colleague Kacey were always so calm and can-do. It gave me a sense of self-assurance that I was actually going to end up with what I was hoping I would end up with."



(top) Crisp white paint and clean mouldings enhance the airy appeal of the home's open floor plan. (bottom) Rich architectural details—Jamison's favorite part of the design process—add inherent warmth in the study.

As their new home neared completion, Susan and Robert could hardly believe the project didn't hit any major hitches along the way. Bemused Susan, "I know so many people who have negative experiences with their builder, but we really had fun!" She continues, "I was able to be creative, and they helped me in that progression. It was just a really positive experience, and that definitely makes a difference." At the close of the collaboration between Jamison and the Walls, each party walked away with the satisfying assertion they had achieved exactly what they wanted. "I love our new home," exclaims Susan. "It's kind of unexpectedly modern...I like to think of it as glamorous!" For Jamison, having a happy client that came in on time and on budget was a rewarding byproduct of the team's hard work.

The team's success on the project would also become a reassuring reminder of the consistency and strength of the Max Crosby process, during a time of dramatic change in the company's life. Sadly, in late 2009, the company's founder and namesake





MAX CROSBY CONSTRUCTION

Dark hardwood floors, ornate stair railings, and a crystal chandelier amp up the stately elegance of this billiards room.

passed on, leaving Jamison to carry on the work of the company that native Charlestonian Max first created in the Lowcountry over 30 years earlier. “The relationship that Max and I developed had become a father-son dynamic...we had a lot of fun, and had a good run together in the business,” says Jamison. “I’m happy to be able to carry the torch and continue to build on the foundation he put in place for the company in the way that he would want me to. It’s a great opportunity to honor him in that way.”

A native of Marietta, Georgia whose father was an Atlanta architect, Jamison first met Max shortly after graduating from College of Charleston in 1996. The young alumnus was leaving at the time to go to architecture school at Savannah College of Art and Design, but his meeting with Max made a profound impact. “Someone from Coldwell Banker introduced me to Max,” smiles Jamison, “and we just kind of hit it off. I kept

finding reasons to come back to Charleston and do little jobs here and there for him.” As graduation neared, the last stretch of study remaining between Jamison and a Masters in Architecture was his thesis. It was at this time, however, that Max offered Jamison a full-time job. “I’ve always been interested in the whole building process, from concept to completion, so I think it was meant to be that I met Max and had this opportunity,” Jamison states, continuing, “I decided that if I wanted to give it a shot, that would be a good time to do so. It became one of the best decisions I ever made in my professional life.” Their complementary collaboration flourished and, six years ago, Max extended another opportunity to his protégé: official partnership in Max G. Crosby Construction Company.

In the six years since, Max and Jamison enjoyed many successful projects—resulting in satisfied homeowners such as Susan

Wall—by adhering to the core principle of the company: building a relationship with the client. Explains Jamison, “We like to be a guiding hand throughout the entire process, where we help them with every decision along the way. We help them choose the lot, bringing their attention to things they may not have considered just riding around in the car looking at property. We help them interview architects to help them find someone in tune to the style of home they’d like to have, as well as someone who will be a good personality match for them.” During that time, the homeowner sets forth their expectations—a critical component of the Max Crosby process. “When you work so closely with the homeowner, you’re also building a great relationship for the building process,” says Jamison. “They get to know you very well and you them, so it’s a great time for everyone to develop their expectations for the process. People know from their own life that the greater the dif-



A delight in white, the kitchen artfully combines contemporary details with a traditional design.

ference between expectations and reality, the greater chance for disappointment. We strive to make sure those expectations are clear before the project even begins.”

To avoid unexpected—and often unwelcome—surprises, the Max Crosby crew first seeks to ensure the architect the homeowners choose for the job is going to design a home that will come in on budget so they don’t ultimately find out they’ve designed a home they can’t afford to build. Also during

that time of the design phase, the Max Crosby team works with an interior designer or decorator, who takes the homeowner out to select things like cabinets, appliances, and tile. On working with design professionals, Jamison offers, “I think incorporating the interior decorator or interior designer during the design of the home, it really makes a difference in the end product. Having someone with that expertise walk with the homeowner into a showroom to help them make selections ties everything together,

and it makes the entire experience easier for the homeowner.” In securing selections early in the construction process, the company is able to incorporate these elements into the overall budget and overall house plans, giving the homeowner an accurate indication of the final budget.

It is this dedication to quality and financial control that has played a pivotal role in the company’s steady success over the years, leading to honors such as being selected by



In the master bedroom, thoughtful details such as art niches and a vanity prove both practical and pleasing.

Southern Living magazine as a member of its Custom Home Builder Program. A charter member of the program since 1993 and member of the Board since 1994, Max Crosby Construction was subsequently tapped to build an "idea house" to be featured in the national magazine. "That was just a great opportunity and a great experience," enthuses Jamison, "and we got to work with some really wonderful people that *Southern Living* chose, like Georgia-based architect Mitch Gin, local interior designer Margaret Donaldson, and local landscape artist Robert Chestnut." The home, which became one of the most widely visited out of the idea homes *Southern Living* completed in the Southeast, was built in a mere six months, open to the public for five months, and sold soon after.

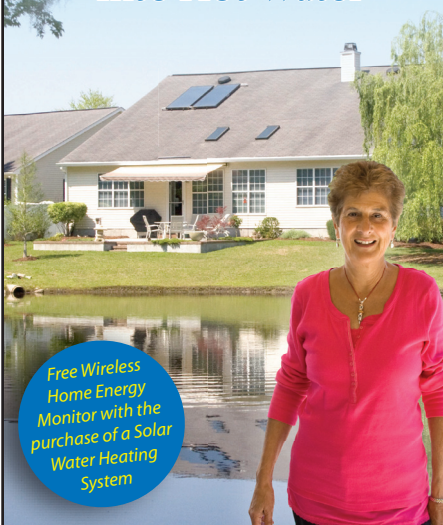
In the course of their work with *Southern Living*, Max Crosby Construction made another key connection that would result in an exciting new endeavor: a collaboration with Haven Custom Homes, who had participated in *Southern Living* idea homes in the past. Developing out of Max Crosby Construction's desire to offer homeowners an environmentally responsible option for building their custom home, the unique pairing of the two companies focuses on coupling the intricate details Max Crosby is known for with Haven's system build

method of custom modular homes. As the homes are built in a controlled environment where materials are continually shielded from weather, there is less site impact and less waste overall. "There is typically only 2 - 3 percent waste on the entire project with a Haven home," elaborates Jamison. Throughout the duration of construction, the Max Crosby team works with both the Haven crew and the homeowners to follow Max Crosby's interior design process and create a custom result.

As the synergistic collaboration with Haven continues to develop, Jamison feels optimistic about forging into the future of the company conferred to him by his late mentor. Displaying Max's trademark team spirit, Jamison credits the company's continued growth and success—in large part—to a strong in-house support system. "Max and his wife Jackie started the company together, and now Jackie and I will carry on Max's legacy," states Jamison. "Jackie is playing such a wonderful supporting role now, and I feel very fortunate to have her by my side to offer advice, to be a critic, and to simply help us move forward." ♦

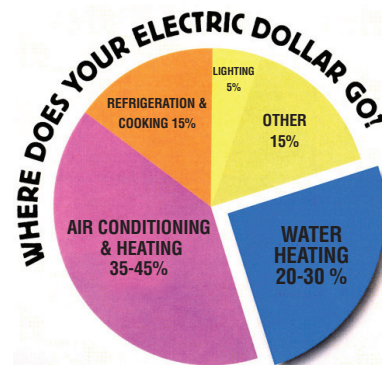
For more information, contact Max G. Crosby Construction at (843) 766-9976 or visit maxcrosbyconstruction.com.

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Judith Allen, homeowner in West Ashley

"I love living in Village Green with the ponds, the marsh and the sunlight. I began thinking about ways to preserve our planet and at the same time save on energy costs. I went online and found numerous sites, but one in particular caught my eye. It stated by utilizing simple, cost effective and reliable technology, I could cut my power bill by 20-30% and provide 80-90% of my water heating needs — AND that Federal Incentives and State tax credits pay for more than one-half of the combined purchase and installation costs of a solar-thermal water heating system — AND the pay-off period was 3 to 6 years - so I figured the time was right to think about letting the sun take care of my hot water needs."



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