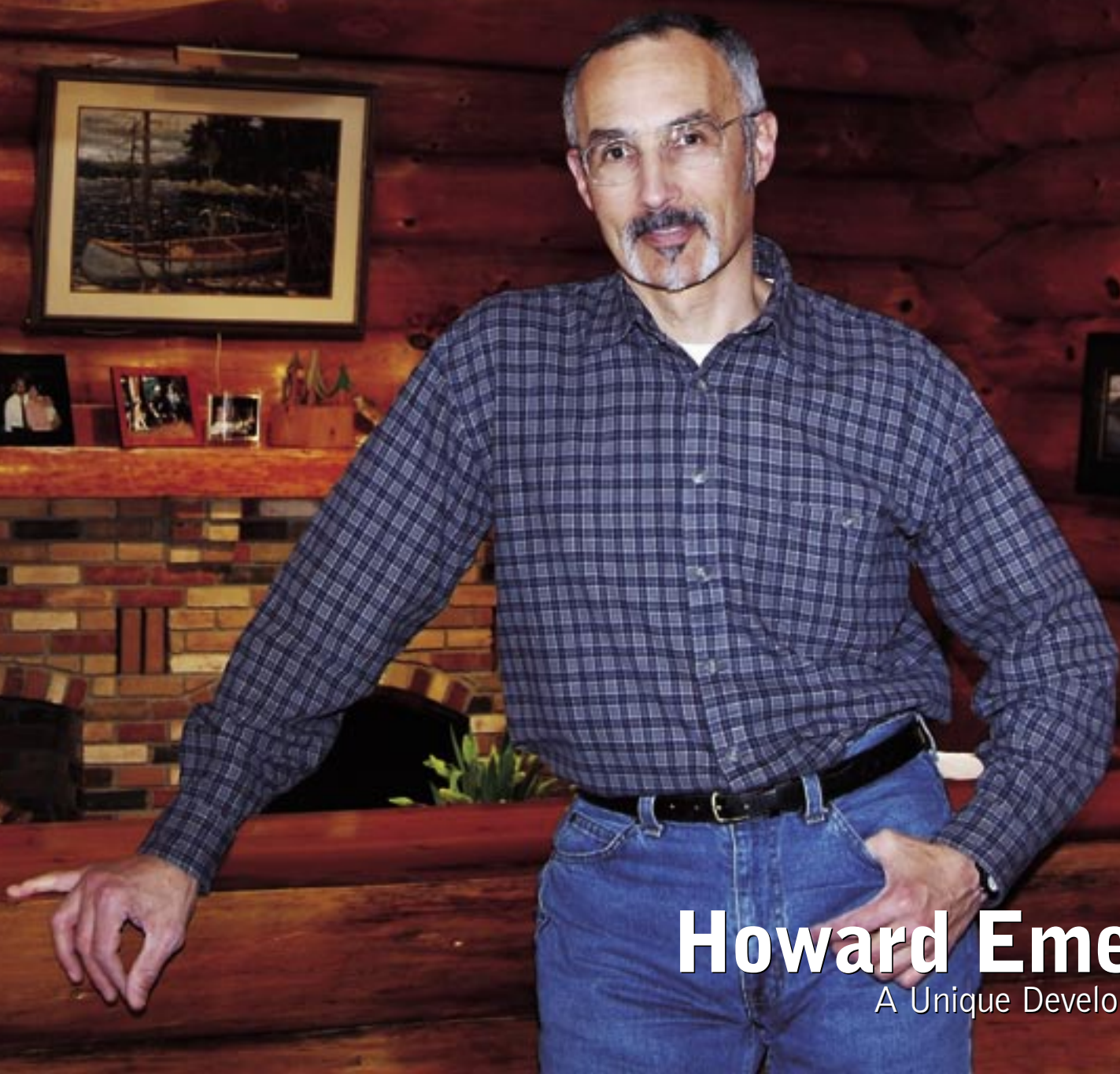


Builder/Architect



Howard Emer
A Unique Developer

EMER DEVELOPMENTS — BUILDING HOMES OF UNPARALLELED CRAFTSMANSHIP AND VALUE FOR OVER HALF A CENTURY

It's always such a pleasure to work with someone who enjoys his work to the extent that Howard Emer does. Howard personifies the description of "detail-oriented." He is, without doubt, one of the most meticulous builders I have ever met, and one who takes pride in not only quality, but also the thoughtfulness of his work.

Emer Developments, Ltd. is a privately owned development company operating in Uxbridge, Ontario. As owner/operator, Howard Emer has experience in all facets of development/construction, including commercial and residential building.

Throughout his 32-year career working in and around the GTA, Howard has maintained a reputation for on-time, on-budget and high-quality work.

The name Emer is synonymous with quality home building in Southern Ontario. In 1950, Moe Emer founded Victoria Wood Development Corporation, which eventually built approximately 25,000 homes in Toronto and surrounding areas. Moe's reputation and legacy was built around integrity and his ability to satisfy his customers. Recognition of his contribution to the home building industry was summarized at his passing by the *Toronto Star Newspaper*: "Mr. Emer was to building what Wayne Gretzky was to goal scoring."

Today, Emer Developments, Ltd. is a continuance of one of the most successful residential building companies to evolve out of post-war Toronto. Howard Emer, a second-generation home builder since 1973, gained his passion, experience and dedication the old-fashioned way, namely, by working at every position within the residential building industry.

Heritage Hills II, Emer Developments' latest project, is a custom homes architecturally controlled and designed community. Bounded by Wooden Sticks Golf Course, the Durham Regional Forest, two privately owned estates, and the original Heritage Hills community, these two-acre estate lots will allow the luxury of privacy and the comfort of proximity to all the local amenities.

Emer Developments, Ltd. will architecturally control house designs and use high-quality exterior products and colour schemes to create an aesthetically pleasing streetscape and a low exterior home maintenance requirement. The end result will contribute to keeping property values at their highest possible levels.

Emer Developments, Ltd. is a member of the Greater Toronto Home Builders Association, and a registered builder in the Tarion Warranty Corporation.

I hope you enjoy reading our cover story on Emer Developments and see the exceptional results when you assemble a team of artisans who are passionate about their trade.

Until next month ...

Giulio Marinescu,
Publisher



Builder/Architect

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PHOTO BY GILBERT BENAMOU OF G. PHOTOGRAPHY

ON THE COVER
Howard Emer of Emer Developments.



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Howard Emer

A Unique Developer

By Michael McKay



Nathalie and Howard Emer of Emer Developments.



PHOTOS BY GILBERT BENAMOU OF G. PHOTOGRAPHY

Unique is a word that developer Howard Emer likes to use a lot, but with good reason. His Heritage Hills II project in Uxbridge, Ontario is as unique a development as you'll find, not just because of the quality of homes being built, but also because of the personal involvement Mr. Emer has with each and every aspect of the process.

Housing development and home building is in Howard's blood. His father, Moe Emer, started Emer Construction Limited in 1949, which became Victoria Wood Development Corp., and in its 55-year existence, constructed more than 25,000 homes in and around the GTA. Howard learned the business from the ground up, participating in every aspect of residential construction work and eventually project management. Most sons come into the family business as an executive of some sort, but Howard



PHOTOS BY GILBERT BENAMOU OF G. PHOTOGRAPHY

chose to learn the business of home construction by working in the field from the ground up. To this day, it still remains a part of his philosophy. "If there is something that needs to be done, then I'll do it. Not only because it has to be done, but also because I know how to do it," says Howard.

It has given him a respect and a unique insight into the everyday process of building homes. "I've learned the most important thing is to treat your tradespeople right; pay them on time and treat them fairly. This breeds loyalty and, in the end, enhances your reputation, and people want to work with you."

He has also taken a route less traveled in the construction industry by studying and graduating in psychology from the University of Waterloo.

"Psychology is all about communication and finding out about people's needs. It's a perfect basis for a housing developer as I have to communicate with so many different people that make up this industry. Each person I deal with, whether they're tradespeople, laborers, buyers, suppliers, government officials or inspectors, have their own agendas, and it's up to me to satisfy and work with them," says Howard.

It is this attention to detail that has enabled the Heritage Hills II development to go forward. Built on the environmentally sensitive Oak Ridges Moraine, the approvals necessary to green light this project were a formidable and all-encompassing task that required Howard's constant attention.



PHOTOS BY GILBERT BENAMOU OF G. PHOTOGRAPHY

"It's been a five-year process, but I had the single-mindedness of purpose to get this project started and to make it successful. I carried it through every step of the way," says Howard. This required him to work with the Township of Uxbridge, and to adhere to township and regional regulations.

He believes that his work with the township has given him a tremendous relationship with all the local authorities, and he hopes that he is known as someone who you can trust to do things right and who cooperates with you to achieve positive results. Howard has always believed that progress, especially in the residential development business, achieves much faster results in the end.

To this end, the 54-acre, 16-lot site is coming very close to being sold out, with



PHOTO BY GILBERT BENAMOU OF G. PHOTOGRAPHY



PHOTOS BY GILBERT BENAMOU OF G. PHOTOGRAPHY

nine lots already sold. Each lot is serviced with a 260-foot well and traditional septic system. There are natural gas, power and telephone lines already installed and waiting to service each lot. “The moraine has superior supplies of clean water,” says Howard, “and because the estate lots are mostly green space, the development has no detrimental effect on the moraine. We have no intention of creating tract housing or destroying the natural beauty of this property. We want the area as natural as possible.”

Heritage Hills II is situated off Concession 6 between Highway 47 and the Goodwood Road. It is surrounded by the Durham Forest and Wooden Sticks Golf Course. “The site is surrounded by hiking trails, and is as natural an environment as you’ll find anywhere in the Durham Region,” says Howard. “This is an area that people can enjoy for the rest of their lives.”

Unlike most developers, Howard Emer has taken a unique approach to this project by being personally involved with every sale and every aspect of the home building. Howard lives in the area and is essentially a new homeowner’s neighbor. This unique situation makes him very accountable for everything that happens during the building process. It is a responsibility Howard doesn’t take lightly, and it has become so important to him that his wife, Nathalie, a local school teacher, has taken a year off teaching to become a necessary part of his team.

“People who buy a lot meet with me in my house, and collectively we plan their home according to their needs,” says Howard. “After several meetings, we come up with a floor plan and design ideas that our architect can transform into working drawings. He then designs a home that not only fits into the scheme of the area, but also fits their needs and desires.”

Building codes are often exceeded. For example, the floor joists are built on 12-inch centers instead of the



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PHOTOS BY GILBERT BENAMOU OF G. PHOTOGRAPHY

standard 16 and the floors are 3/4-inch plywood instead of 5/8-inch. Beneath the architectural design that meets the requirements of both Howard and his homeowners “is a more than solid structure that will last many lifetimes,” says Howard.

It is not unusual in this business for developers to sell you a property, and then they are never heard from again. For Howard Emer, living and building in this community ensure that he is not going anywhere. His commitment to his neighbors and homeowners is a unique situation that makes Heritage Hills II a place to call home. ■



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