

Industry Legends.

Building CONTRACTOR

BUILDING THE RIGHTWAY.

HIA's winner of the GreenSmart Home of the Year.

As our magazine this issue is dedicated to 'green' building, we thought what better industry legend than the folks who recently won the Housing Institute of Australia's GreenSmart Home of the Year. Right Homes, led by owner/operators Gary and Anna Wright, took home the prize with its 9 star energy efficient home – the Jade 909. Here we look at their rise to the top and their dedication to sustainable buildings and building practices.

The Jade 909. The 9-star energy efficient home by Right Homes.



★ Gary had worked in the building industry for about 20 to 25 years as a carpenter alongside his father, who introduced him to the industry when he was about 16 years' old. He was always very hands on with any aspect of building and consequently was never without a job to do. He met his childhood sweetheart, Anna, at 16 and subsequently got married at the ripe old age of 21. They have been married for nearly 23

years and have three young children; 16, 13, and the youngest being nine years old. They have always enjoyed living in the Perth metropolitan area and travelled extensively around Australia with their children. Having always been a team with everything they had done, it seemed logical they both work in the new business; a recipe that has proved successful.



HOW RIGHT HOMES CAME ABOUT

Gary and Anna had built a couple of homes for personal use when a real-estate friend commented about the superior quality of the homes being built. He suggested that given Gary was a registered builder, both he and Anna should be offering homes of that quality to other potential homeowners and make a business around the quality the two were able to produce. They never even thought about becoming a building company, but once the idea had been voiced everything snowballed from there.

HISTORY OF RIGHT HOMES

Gary had worked in the industry as a carpenter before promoting to supervisor with some of Perth's well-known building companies. He then decided to take his enthusiasm for building to the next level and established Right Homes in 2006. Anna had already assisted Gary in running their successful carpentry business, which also helped them forge ties with some of the industry's best tradespeople and suppliers. With these business relationships and Gary's industry knowledge, Right Homes had a solid foundation with which to start.

Anna has a hands-on role in the company which builds up to 35 homes per year. Apart from family responsibilities, her role expanded from accounts to helping with client relations, selections, staff relations, sales and co-ordinating contracts. Initially there was only one other full-time staff member ▶



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– Dino (Anna’s brother) – who became a supervisor for Right Homes. The business continued with only three until at the end of 2009 when Richard was employed as a scheduler/estimator, and in June 2010 Michael was employed as an in-house designer. Dino is described by Anna as an outstanding contributor to the business.

“We often get a barrage of comments about how professional and approachable Dino is with clients, trades and suppliers,” Anna says.

Richard is the engine running in the background in

at both ends of the price range,” Anna says.

As a Housing Industry Association GreenSmart accredited builder, Gary said he knew he wanted Right Homes to be leader in sustainability. He says good passive design is critical in helping to provide comfortable home and significant savings on energy costs.

“It only makes sense to give your client a home that is comfortable all the time, not just 15 minutes after they hit the air-conditioner switch.” Gary says. “In general, understanding the client, their life-

Brick Australia – Right Homes constructed its own display home, the Jade 909, situated at “The Vale” Display Village, Wesley Way, Aveyley. From the street it might look like any modern new home but in fact, this home represents the future of sustainability. The home boasts a nine star rating due to careful thought and planning – key elements to maintaining a solar passive home in a climate such as Perth. The home’s main focus is its living areas, which are north-facing to maximise the use of the winter sun; whilst the outdoor entertaining area is on the eastern face to shelter the interior living area from the morning sun. The home uses Low-E glass which deflects UV rays and slows the transfer of heat into the home. Cavity wall insulation (a recycled rock-wool) has also been included, along with R4 Insulation in the ceiling to maintain a comfortable temperature throughout the home.

The Jade 909 achieves a 76 per cent reduction in water use when compared to a standard home. Anna says, “A representative from the Water Corporation visited the home and made the comment ‘Right Homes had done everything that was possible for a modern home on a small lot. The home incorporates waste recycling, rainwater tanks, and six star tapware with waterwise gardens, a credit to Right Homes. Right Homes had even had educational notes to encourage potential clients to be more water-wise’.”

The home also achieves a 119 per cent reduction in energy use when compared to a standard home. Other added benefits include; a 3kw solar photovoltaic system and a Solar HWU which assist in reducing overall energy consumption. However the real secret is the individual passive design which means the home can operate between 18-28 degrees year round.

Right Homes is continually passionate about demonstrating that energy efficiency and high star ratings can be affordable.

the office, tirelessly making sure all orders and correspondence with suppliers and trades is kept up-to-date. Anne describes Michael as the magician at Right Homes – able to create a fantastic design for a client taking into account the client’s wish list, budget, lifestyle and wrapping the whole lot in passive design.

All staff at Right Homes are HIA GreenSmart accredited professionals and support the values and vision of Right Homes. Both Anna and Gary believe their company is “very big” on quality and personalised service.

“As we are a small company we are both involved every step of the way and our diligence shows in the end product. Clients will always deal direct with the builder in every step of the way. Right Homes constructs custom-built [individually designed] homes

style and budget was vital when designing homes – and incorporating solar passive design was a natural next step to take with clients. And delivering an excellent product and building environmentally friendly homes was satisfying.”

In late 2008/9 Anna and Gary looked for a company to help them on the sustainable path and managed to receive an offer from Jade Projects to form a partnership. From there both companies continue to design and construct solar passive and sustainable homes for clients in Perth.

THE BUILDING OF JADE 909

Right Homes is continually passionate about demonstrating that energy efficiency and high star ratings can be affordable – keeping this in mind and together with its partners Jade Projects and Think

The home does not stop at sustainability – featuring a design that caters for people of all abilities. The home has been designed to cater for people with disabilities, people who have become infirm, or perhaps do not have the mobility they once had. Right Homes' clients will not have to leave their home as they get older because the powerpoints are too low or they have to manage a step to get into the home. The lever handles and tapware will make it easier for them to move through the home if they happen to be wheelchair bound and larger doors throughout also make access easier within the home.

The Jade 909 has been constructed using recyclable building materials with the best thermal mass qualities and quality energy efficient appliances and fittings throughout; adding cost saving benefits to future occupants.

Early in 2010 Right Homes won the WA HIA-Ult Solar GreenSmart Home of the Year, Water Efficiency and Partnership Awards and later attended the 2010 BPN Sustainability Awards in Sydney attaining finalist in the New Homes section. Right Homes continued on to Melbourne for the National HIA Boral GreenSmart Awards where Anna and Gary were awarded the National GreenSmart Project Home of the Year and received finalist in the Water Efficiency category. This was an outstanding achievement for Right Homes.

From the street it might look like any modern new home but in fact, this home represents the future of sustainability.

Anna says the main principals of a GreenSmart home are:

- Improve the energy, resource and water efficiency of the home which enables home owners to waste less and recycle more.
- Reduce the waste from the building process and improve site management during construction
- Create a healthier home for its occupants.

The benefits include lower energy and water bills, a warmer house in winter, a cooler house in summer, healthier home benefits and less landfill waste. The Jade 909 does not even require an air-conditioner or heater to achieve this comfort.

Anna says the company was delighted with the national recognition for its nine star carbon neutral home.

"In the past few years of operation, we have

focussed on sustainability," she said, "All of our staff are GreenSmart accredited, and we are able to produce individual designs at an affordable price. For too long, green sustainable homes, encompassing solar passive design with environmental additives, whilst desirable, have often been beyond the budget of many homebuilders."

FUTURE OF RIGHT HOMES

The team is excited about the prospects of Right Homes and its future. It has already produced an outstanding 12 Homes, 8 star or higher for 2010, eight of which are 8.5 Stars or more. It is their hope to have more and more homes built that have been 'future-proofed' for generations to come. Society's children are the ones who will end up having to pay for these energy guzzlers being created today and Right Homes would like to do what it can to help them have a happy, healthy and sustainable future. **BC**

