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Creative Castles, Inc.
Bringing Your Dreams to Life



Photo by Kathleen O. Ryan Fine Arts

Creative Castles, Inc. Bringing Your Dreams to Life

By Jim Akans

Creative Castles, Inc. is a custom homebuilder and remodeling company in Montgomery County, in the Lake Conroe area. Their goal is to create a home that is a unique personal reflection of their customer's needs, desires, personalities and lifestyles.

"We strive to ensure that our clients experience a building process that is exciting and fun, fulfilling and rewarding, while building their dream home," notes Surrey Ewing. Creative Castles, Inc. has earned a reputation for creating a building experience that provides

exceptional customer satisfaction thus forming lasting relationships.

Creative Castles was founded by Surrey Ewing and Dan Epps in 1992. Surrey and Dan had previously worked together for a prominent homebuilder in Houston, Texas. In the early 1980's, Dan started his own company, Danworth Custom Homes, building exclusively in Westin Lakes (a Belin Development). Dan's company was doing well, meanwhile Creative Castles opened in their first subdivision, Maplewood Park (Memorial/Eldridge

area) of Houston. Maplewood subdivision was a perfect fit for Creative Castles, Inc., an upscale, gated community starting in the \$400,000 range. In 1995, Creative Castles, Inc. was asked by Belin Development to join their team of custom builders at Bentwater subdivision on Lake Conroe. In 1999, Dan and his family moved to North Texas; Dan sold his shares of the business to Surrey and his wife, Susan.

Having been married for 31 years; Susan, is an ideal partner with Surrey in Creative Castles, Inc. Surrey states,



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“Susan’s role is multi-faceted- having both a degree and experience in accounting and marketing. She handles all the accounting, marketing, customer service and any other day to day operations of the business.”

“We are a family-owned business,” states Surrey. “We have been building elegant custom homes for almost two decades, and I bring more than 31 years of homebuilding experience to the company. Our customers have a high level of reassurance with that; because, Susan and I both work directly with our clients. We don’t have a superintendent to oversee our projects...I am the person they see on the job site virtually every day and know first hand what is happening on each project.

Surrey adds, “Creative Castles limits the number of projects we work on at a given time. We are able to maintain the personalization level of attention the customer deserves. We usually meet with our clients weekly or biweekly to discuss the construction of their home, upcoming selections or any personal touches they wish to add or change. We take great pride in the personal service that we offer to our clients. We

“Many have said building a home was traumatic and very difficult. If we would build again, we would give the plans to Surrey, ask how much we would owe him and when could he start. Asking for other bids would be a waste of time. Why look elsewhere when perfection is before you.”

—Mr. and Mrs. M. Shoquist

are devoted to exceed our customer’s expectations in their satisfaction with their new home...it is our number one priority.”

Surrey states, “Upon relocating our company to the Lake Conroe area, we found it to be more of a retirement community of successful business men



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and women. Astonishingly, many of these customers have never built a home. We recognize that spending time up front with our customers,

long before the project begins is the key element in a successful building experience.” Surrey observes, “Many times people call when they are almost

ready to talk to a builder. They have already purchased a lot and have plans designed. We, as well as many third party resources such as builder magazines and books, architects/ engineers, etc. advise people to choose a builder prior to this point in the process. That way we are able to give the client a builder’s insight on any unexpected additional costs or issues, allowing the client to make accurate and informative decisions.

“We start by educating our clients of the building process,” notes Surrey, “such as cost up front for design and engineering of plans, chronological order of the building process, time frame, etc. In the initial stage of the building process, we assist in evaluating their building site, with such things as environmental issues, contour of site, possible views, orienting on site, etc. and establishing a budget criteria



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for the project not only the home but other items such as (pool, boat house, landscaping, etc). We furnish our clients with a reference list, including all homes built and testimonials. We also give our clients the opportunity to visit several previous clients' homes, thus giving them a chance to visit with our homeowners. Surrey adds, "We like our clients to feel comfortable with us - developing a trust and knowing we are there for them. We hope that the knowledge our clients gain from us forms a solid relationship early on."

Creative Castles also introduces their clients to a team of architects and engineers with whom they have

"We love our home built by Creative Castles. We found Surrey to be one of the most honest businessmen we have ever dealt with and highly recommend Creative Castles to others. It is very clear that he takes pride in his work and wants each home to be a true dream home for its owners."
—Mr. and Mrs. R. Templeton

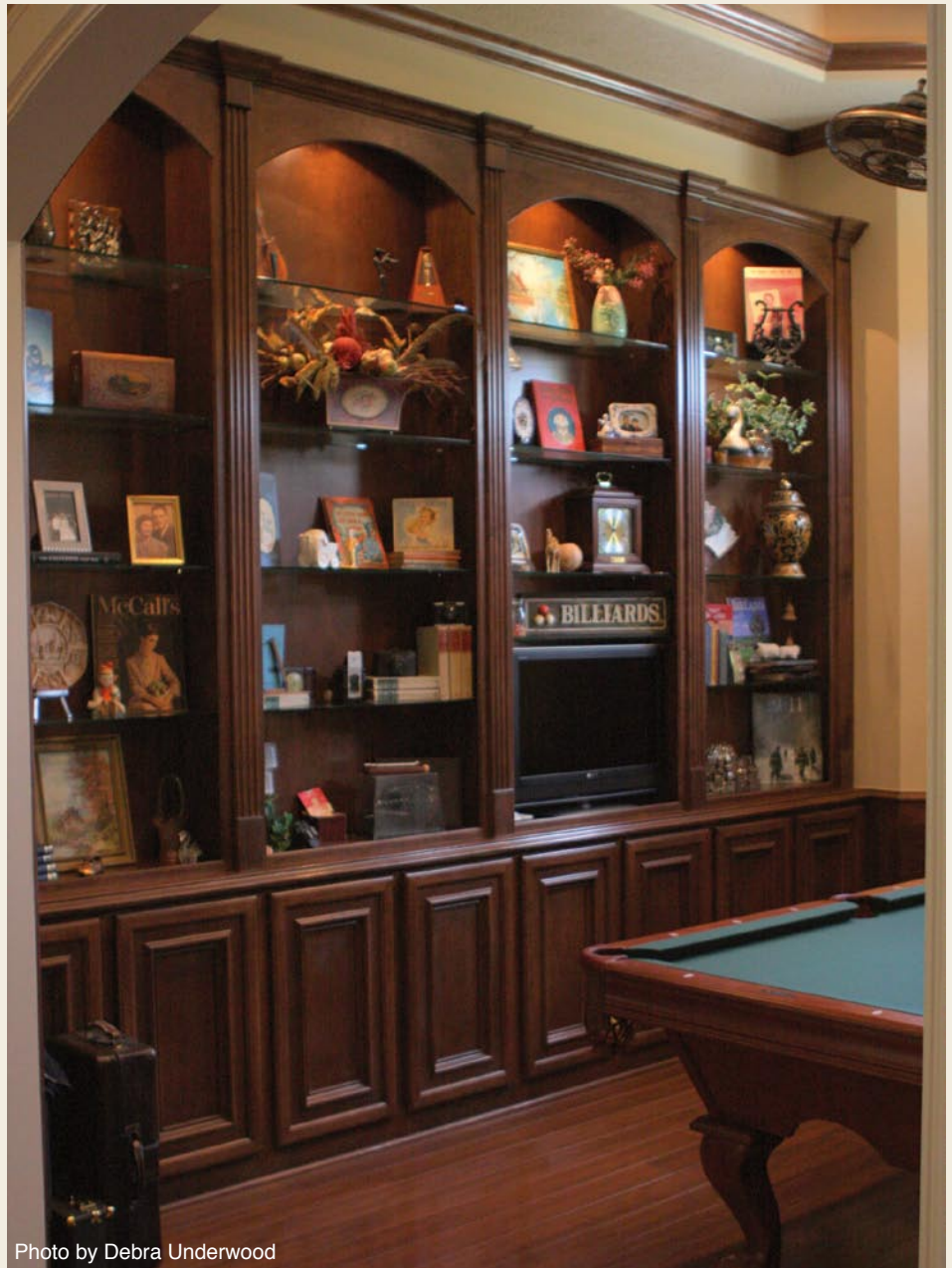


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established an ongoing relationship. The clients appreciate this professional input when designing their home.

Surrey states, “We normally accompany our clients at all architectural meetings. We make it a point to get to know our customers and their visions for a new home. We want the client to feel comfortable with us and we want to feel comfortable with the client. We understand this is the clients dream home, and make sure the design process follows their visions.”

Creative Castles typically has their clients visit some of their vendors so the client can explore their tastes in products for their home. That helps them to focus in on accurate allowances for the home budget.

“That is why we go into great detail during the planning and design phase,” affirms Surrey. “That helps us all achieve a plan that reflects the home the customer is truly looking for. Once we begin construction, we give our clients calendars every 30 days to let them know what will be taking place in the coming month. This also notes when we need to meet with them on the job site. There are certain stages during construction where meeting with the customer on site is critical in making sure we are on track toward achieving their goals. This open line of communications is a key to our typically being within one-percent of our original budget number when the home is completed.”

Surrey adds, “We are not a big volume builder, as we prefer dedicating our time to the customers we are building for. Every one is different; we want to build a home that is unique to the dreams of each of our customers. Our mission is to take what is unfamiliar and intimidating about home building and make it more enjoyable than our customers imagined.”

Creative Castles, Inc. is a member of the Texas Association of Builders (TAB), Greater Houston Builders Association (GHBA), Texas Residential Construction Commission (TRCC), National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and Better Business Bureau (BBB).

For additional information about Creative Castles, Inc., please visit their website at www.creativecastlesinc.com or call (936) 449-4306.