

John Mead of Cellar Ridge Construction talks Passive, Inspiration and Integrity

By **Berit Griffin**

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Cellar Ridge Construction founder, John Mead, set out to be a pioneer in applying the art and science of building green to make structures healthier for both his clients and the environment. In turn, Cellar Ridge Construction is a company whose purpose is to provide it's clients with the finest green and sustainable homes, designs or remodels available by today's standards. The company's contemporary design and sustainability efforts regarding the [Saffron Fields Vineyard](http://www.marvin.com/plan/inspiration-gallery/case-studies?view=806) (<http://www.marvin.com/plan/inspiration-gallery/case-studies?view=806>) in Yamhill, Oregon earned them a 2014 Integrity [Red Diamond Achiever Award](http://www.marvin.com/integrity/promotions/red-diamond-achiever?menu=program-overview) (<http://www.marvin.com/integrity/promotions/red-diamond-achiever?menu=program-overview>). We caught up with John to talk about Cellar Ridge, accomplishments, inspiration and more.



Cellar Ridge Construction strives to provide customers with the finest Green and Sustainable building, home, or remodel available. What is the driving force behind this mission?

JM: Before the turn of the last century John Ruskin wrote “When we build let us think we build forever. Let it not be for present delight nor for present use alone. Let it be such work that our descendants will thank us for, and let us think, as we lay stone upon stone, that a time is to come when these stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say, as they look upon the labor and wrought substance of them, “See! This our fathers did for us” John Ruskin (1819 – 1900).

The driving force behind the mission is that we want people to look at our work 100 years from now and say “Cellar Ridge did it right” from an ecological standpoint as well as artfully creating structures of beauty.

In your expert opinion, what makes a house a home?

JM: People make a house a home. When a family makes the emotional connection with a house and embraces it as their own we have done our job. We have succeeded in attending to the thousands of details which need to be done in harmony with the design and more importantly the intention behind the design.

Last year Cellar Ridge received a Red Diamond Achiever Award for work on the Saffron Fields Vineyard. What do you believe helped Cellar Ridge rise above the rest?

JM: The Saffron Fields project succeeded because the Integrity windows married into the design so well. In some cases we created custom steel stiffeners between large field mulled windows to help control deflection during windy Oregon summers. In other areas factory mulled windows came together in an artful fashion which played off the contemporary design.

Beside the Saffron Fields Vineyard, what are one or two additional accomplishments that you are particularly proud of? Why?

JM: As a green builder we are proud of our beautiful Net Zero homes we have built for clients in the past. One of the elements which helps Cellar Ridge stand apart is that we realize that beauty is a key element in sustainability. Homes that are a delight to see and to dwell within inspire homeowners to care for and maintain that home for many generations. When this happens we can rest assured that the precious resources we put into that home will not be squandered.

When working on a new project, what are some initial areas you tend to look to for inspiration?

JM: We constantly keep our eyes out for new and old designs which can come into play on a future project. Sometimes it comes from a building science conference, other times a stroll to a neighborhood café. The key is to open our imaginations to the possibilities and make connections in new and innovative ways.

What is the one building trend right now that most excites you?

JM: Passive house. Plain and simple, this is the standard people will be talking about over the next 5-10 years. This standard has gain phenomenal adoption across Europe and is making its way into the US. We have seen the Pacific Northwest Passive house conference grow from a dozen attendees four years ago, to over 200 this past year. There is tremendous potential energy growing in the Architecture community about Passive house, and the projects on display at this year's conference were stunning and efficient.

Why do you choose to use Integrity products?

JM: We choose Integrity products because of a number of factors. Integrity makes great looking windows. The frames are thermally stable and the value on this product line is fantastic. We have a great respect for the level of service we have experienced working with Integrity.

What three words would you use to describe your expectations for the summer building season?

JM: Vigorous Healthy Growth

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