

Construction In The Lowcountry

When we hear about someone building a home on their private island, many of us envision tycoons and lavish mansions. In the case of Todd Bradley, longtime Beaufort resident and owner of Live Oak Builders, this picture couldn't be further from reality. Owning an island is a dream come true for a working man with a deep love of the water and boating. He bought Egret Island off Pleasant Point nearly two and a half years ago and completed building his family's home there a year later.

Those who know Todd can attest to his humble nature and love of his community. "He's a very kind and thoughtful person who has a generous spirit and loves the Lowcountry," said Terry Rice, marketing coordinator for Live Oak Builders.

Todd stumbled upon the island real estate opportunity one day while out on his boat. "One day I was going up the river and noticed a 'For Sale' sign on the island's dock," he remembers. "I pulled up and walked up the dock to check it out. The next day, I went to the realtor and made an offer."

Todd moved to Beaufort 17 years ago from Pennsylvania, where he had been a home builder for several years. His first 10 years in the Beaufort area he worked as a construction superintendent for Alcoa, building houses on Dataw Island. After Alcoa got out of the building business, Todd ventured out on his own and launched Live Oak Builders in Beaufort in 2007.

"Todd has a keen ability to patiently listen to his clients, apply his knowledge of construction in the Lowcountry and assist in identifying products and solutions that meet requirements and are within budget," said Terry, who is also a former client of Todd's. "With his low-key personality, he made it easy to develop a rapport based in trust, right from the initial meeting. That communication style helped minimize stress levels throughout the construction of our beautiful, custom home."

Todd built his own family's first South Carolina home on St. Helena Island and followed up a few years later with a house on Lady's Island. "Both of those houses were landlocked so we were very interested in building a home on the water," he said. "We just never dreamed that our next home would be completely surrounded by

water."

The property consists of 11 acres, five acres at high tide, and included a 2,000-foot dock connecting the island to the mainland. The dock is just wide enough for a golf cart, but not wide enough for vehicles, making building the home a challenge.

"Everything necessary for construction had to come from the mainland by barge," explained Todd. "Each trip on the barge would take about four hours to get to the edge of the island. There were a couple of trips for the lumber, one for shingles and sheet rock. We even had to use the barge to bring over the spray foam insulation truck as well as the septic tank."

Despite any difficulties encountered in building the home, both Todd and his wife Joni agree that any frustrations were worth the end result and they are thrilled to be living in their island home.

The couple lives in the main house, a one bedroom 1,600 square foot Lowcountry style home that also features touches of Key West (their favorite vacation spot). It's livable and comfortable because, as Joni puts it, "We're not crown moulding kind of people." The guest house is a two bedroom, 900 square foot cottage that regularly accommodates family and friends.

The Bradleys spend their days on Egret Island enjoying time outdoors with their son, Nick, project manager for Live Oak Builders, and their grandchildren, who



range in age from 4 to 14. "None of them have any fear of the water," said Joni. "Their favorite activity is swimming off the dock."

According to Todd, some people think they're crazy, but he adds, "If we become known as the crazy old couple who live on an island in a pink and purple house, I'm okay with that."



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