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Stephen Wessling: Architecture is a field for both the patient and determined

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Stephen Wessling is every bit the Renaissance man he appears - a long time architect, an avid hunter, and fisherman, and reader of the classics. Above all Stephen is dedicated to his family and caring for those less fortunate and down on their luck.

A 46- year veteran in the field of architecture, Wessling counts patience and determination among qualities of a successful professional in this industry. Valuing construction integrity and longevity over cost-cutting measures, Wessling has established an award winning architectural firm that is in its 19th year with a client base of over 300 worldwide.

Wessling discovered his passion for architecture at an early age when he observed his father doing technical drawings for his work and was amazed at what he was able to create on paper. In the ninth grade, he viewed a television show about drawing house plans and fell in love with architecture. Stephen followed his passion and graduated from Boston Architectural College in 1975, second in his class. His early career as an architect took a sudden downturn when he found himself out of work due to an economic slowdown. Using his talent and determination he started working out of the basement in his home located in Milton. He steadily grew a one-person operation to a 21-person award-winning firm occupying 7,800 s/f of the 8th floor of 1250 Hancock St., Quincy, Mass. Today, Wessling Architects is licensed in 15 states and is a full service firm with a broad level of experience and a long track record of success in architecture, interior design, building restoration, and professional services.

Wessling says, "Architecture is a field for both the patient and determined. It's is an endurance test like life."

Wessling describes the best part of his job as, "helping our clients achieve their goals and providing the expertise to design their building so it is aesthetically pleasing, functions properly and has the flexibility it needs to adapt to the ever changing world we live in. It is about creating a building of lasting value that does not need significant repairs after it is completed.

"What sets us apart from other architectural firms is the depth of experience and knowledge we have gained from studying and diagnosing why there are so many premature building failures and finding the most cost effective solution to those problems. We transfer this knowledge to the building we design providing the contractors the drawings and details that are so very important to give them direction for a successful building. This sets us apart from our competition but leaves the challenge of educating the client on how to make up-front investment in the cost to design and detail a building correctly rather than to diagnose and solve problems later. It is more attractive to pay the lesser cost in the beginning but much more costly in the end," said Wessling.

The depth of experience and knowledge on building failures and remedies has made Wessling sought out to serve others as a consultant to clients, colleagues and professional associations,

presenting as an expert witness in building causes and remedies. Seminar topics include organic growth issues, building envelope failures, historic preservation, building use analysis and forensic architecture. Other distinctions include service as expert witness in the courtroom arbitration, mediation and peer reviews and consults with other architectural firms on the building exterior details.

Recently, Wessling Architects led the work of the design team for New England Conservatory Campus winner of the 2010 Preservation Achievement Award.

"This project brought these exceptional buildings to a high standard of renovation and reinforces the idea that good maintenance is good preservation", said Sarah Kelly, executive director of the Boston Preservation Alliance.

Wessling has numerous affiliations that include New England Chapter Roof Consultants Institute (president), National Trust for Historic Preservation, Boston Preservation Alliance, Internal Code Council, Construction Specifications Institute, National Fire Protection Association, Boston Society of Architects, Preservation Massachusetts, American Institute for Architects and the Building Owners Management Association (board of directors.)

Stephen and his wife Mary are residents of Milton and are active parishioners of St. Agatha Parish since 1976. They have been married for 40 years and proud parents of three children and six grandchildren. He also enjoys hunting and fishing with his brothers.

Stephen has never lost sight of those in need. He is generous, compassionate and dedicated to helping the community and those less fortunate. Stephen and Mary are actively involved with many organizations: My Brother's Keeper (development manager), South Shore Habitat for Humanity (board of directors), and Elizabeth Seaton Academy, among others. Stephen recently received the prestigious Bishop Cheverus award from Cardinal Sean O'Malley for his service to the church.

The focus of the firm is always on the future. Our philosophy is one of teamwork, collaboration and encouraging all to reach their full potential by continuous learning and moving out of their comfort zone to take on new challenges. This builds the knowledge and confidence needed to grow and stay competitive in today's environment and provides our clients with the best service possible.

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