

Will Hamnett: Richmond Real Estate Connoisseur

Writer: Kay Baker

“Richmond real estate.” Say these words to Realtor Will Hamnett and you hit the jackpot. “I was born and raised in Richmond,” says Will proudly. “Combine that with my father’s influence as a realtor-turned-builder, and I’m absolutely hooked on selling real estate in Richmond.”

Today a multi-million dollar producer, Will knew early on that he was destined for a career in real estate. The oldest of three boys, Will gladly spent his middle and high school summers working for his father, Bill Hamnett, owner of The Kittrell Company, which specializes in new home construction. “Working with my father gave me an opportunity to become familiar with the building industry from the ground up,” says Will. “Knowing how the process works has been invaluable to me as a real estate agent. Whether I’m walking someone through a home that’s under construction or showing them an older house that needs renovations, I can share knowledge from a builder’s perspective that’s useful to them.”

After attending St. Bridget’s and Douglas Freeman High School in Richmond, Will continued his studies at Virginia Commonwealth University and Hampden-Sydney College, where he graduated with a B.A. in history. Upon graduation, he returned to his roots in real estate and settled in Richmond, his city of choice.

The Career of a Lifetime

“After I graduated, I decided to get my real estate license while I considered my career options,” Will explains. “Soon after, I joined Prudential Slater James River REALTORS®. I’ve been selling real estate with them ever since and can’t imagine working anywhere else.”

Starting his career with the same agency his father had once worked for was a natural fit for Will, who is one of Prudential’s top realtors. “When Will joined our team, it was clear that with his background and experience, he had a better understanding of what it takes to be successful in this business,” says Earl M. Jackson, President and Broker of Prudential Slater James River REALTORS®, a reputable agency that has served the Richmond area for more than 60 years.

Will came on board with Prudential as the agency’s youngest realtor. “I was in a category by myself,” he recalls with a laugh. Focused, motivated, and wise beyond his years, Will embraced all that Prudential had to offer and looked to his successful colleagues as mentors. A quick study, it wasn’t long before Will’s reputation as an established realtor and steady producer grew.

It was during this time that Will also developed an interest in buying and renovating historic properties in Richmond’s popular Fan district. “It’s a labor of

love that my middle brother, David, and I enjoy doing together,” says Will, noting that his youngest brother, Matt, is also involved in real estate on the West Coast. “Thanks to these renovations, my background in construction, and years of sales experience, I have a broad brush of expertise when it comes to real estate.”

Because of this, Will works well with clients of all ages and needs. “Will’s versatility is quite an asset,” says Earl. Averaging at least one sale per week, Will uses this talent to give 110% of himself to his career. “I’m completely committed to real estate,” says Will. Notes Earl, “As a rising realtor, there’s no question that Will’s in this for the long run.”

Lasting Influences

In addition to his desire to succeed, Will attributes much of his success to those around him. “I owe everything I am to my parents,” says Will. “So much of what they instilled in me has helped me professionally.” Business savvy and patience are traits Will credits to his father, while from his mother, Joanna, a teacher, he acquired a thirst for knowledge and a desire to educate and inform people. “I enjoy providing people with information that can help them make sound real estate decisions,” says Will.

Other influential people in Will’s career were Keith Kreuer, his first Office Manager, and fellow Prudential Realtor, Rick Stockel. “I owe my positive start in real estate to Keith,” says Will, adding that Keith helped set his career off on the right foot. “Working with Will, I was excited about his desire to satisfy his clients’ needs and to embrace technology in order to meet them,” says Keith, now of Caldwell Banker. “Will was the young lion coming into real estate and is now one of the realtors whose success will help raise our industry’s bar.”

Also helping him accomplish this has been Rick, to whom Will turns for a fellow agent’s perspective. “Whenever I have a question or need some advice, I can count on Rick to have the right answer for me,” says Will. Working together over the years, the two have developed a great deal of mutual respect for one another. “Will has a tremendous work ethic,” says Rick. “He’s willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done right, which translates into client loyalty. The first time I met him, I knew he would be a success.”

Personal Service Prevails

Much of Will’s success is based on his commitment to provide outstanding service to all. “I pride myself on being able to treat every client like they’re the only one that I have,” says Will. “This means if I’m too busy to give someone the personal service that they deserve, I refer them to another agent because I want to make sure everybody I work with has my undivided attention.” Repeat clients Caroline and Mike Harding are grateful for Will’s ability to provide such personal

attention. "Will's more than a realtor, he's a friend," they say. "He even bought our daughter, Lucy Grace, a present when she was born."

To provide personalized service, Will encourages his clients to let him handle as much of their real estate transactions as possible. "I like to keep stress and surprises to a minimum," says Will. "People know they can count on me to handle everything, so I want to keep my clients informed and up-to-date throughout the process," he says. "Will's ability to communicate with others is incredible," says Clyde Blanton, who along with his wife, Susie, is a Loan Officer at Chase Manhattan Mortgage Corporation. "Thanks to Will's involvement and attention to detail, all of our transactions run smoothly."

With his background in building, Will also has a wealth of resources when it comes to repairing or renovating houses. "I'm always glad to refer a plumber, electrician or roofer," says Will, who provides a variety of referrals to take the guesswork out of getting renovations done right. "Will's referrals were instrumental in helping us renovate our first home," share the Hardings. Agree Jana and Jason McQuaid, "Will has pockets of people to assist with all the details involved with buying and selling a house. From inspections to renovations, he really earns his sale with all the help that he provides."

Strategies for Success

Will's business strategies also contribute to his success. For sellers, his aggressive marketing plan typically nets a sale within ten days. "My goal is to get maximum exposure for a house as soon as it goes on the market," says Will, noting that his sales volume triples each year.

Will takes an equally effective approach for buyers. "In the early stages, I follow the buyer's lead regarding the style, size and location of a future home," says Will. "Since this is one of the biggest investments they'll ever make, I want them to be 100% comfortable with their decision." Concur the McQuaids, "When Will helped us buy our house, it was obvious he was more concerned about our satisfaction than with making a sale. He understood our needs and was extremely patient and professional in meeting them."

When working with the Prudential Relocation Department's talented staff, Will's top priority is to ensure that newcomers feel at home in Richmond. "If it's someone's first visit to Richmond, I show them around town to acclimate them with landmarks, neighborhoods, and school districts," says Will.

As a Richmond native, he's also familiar with the growth trends in the area's real estate market and puts this knowledge to good use for those on the move. "As newcomers, people put a lot of trust in me to help them make a sound investment. As such, I want them to purchase in an area where they're going to be comfortable, and they're going to have a home with good resale potential."

For sellers leaving the area, Will likes to handle all aspects of the sale so clients can focus entirely on their move. "Will's real estate expertise and thorough knowledge of the area make him a top choice for assisting with relocations," says Prudential Relocation Director Pam Hathaway. "His ability to remain calm and supportive during what can be a stressful situation is remarkable."

Communication is Key

Throughout all aspects of his work, Will's ability to communicate so well keeps everyone informed and involved. Though he prefers face-to-face conversations, Will realizes that active lifestyles and busy careers often require additional forms of communication. Besides making telephone calls, Will uses the Internet to keep informed and in touch with others. "Between phone calls and email messages, Will communicated with us on a regular basis," say homeowners DeMarion and Carl Johnston. "As a result, he helped us find our dream house in no time at all."

"I begin each morning on the computer, checking new listings," says Will. "If I see anything that might look good to a buyer, I'll contact them so we can move on it right away." Besides using technology to conduct research and share information, Will also uses it to market his sellers' houses via his comprehensive Web site, www.willhamnett.com. "In such a competitive market, it's good to have Will on your team," say the Johnstons. "His assertive approach to listing, showing, and bidding really gets results."

A Promising Future

Though a dedicated realtor, Will recognizes the importance of balancing work and play. When he's not at the office, he takes time to enjoy the great outdoors. "Hiking, fishing and golfing are just a few of the activities I enjoy," he says. "Generally, I just like being outdoors. It's refreshing and helps me recharge my batteries."

Whether he's casting a line in the Chesapeake Bay or showing a new listing, it's obvious that Will enjoys all facets of his life. "I honestly can't see myself doing anything else," he says. "There are no limits on what I can achieve." Adds Clyde, "Will's way ahead of the game. Many people never accomplish in their lifetime what he's done so far."