



Pioneer Log Homes on the road to bigger and better buildings

Bryan Reid established Pioneer Log Homes in 1973. He and his brother and general manager Andre Chevigny, who came on board in 1987, have guided Pioneer through rapid expansion over the years.

The company started at Pioneer Ranch at 150 Mile House and moved to its current location on land leased from Williams Lake Indian Band about 10 years ago. Since then the company has opened two new sites located at Soda Creek and 153 Mile.

Pioneer manufactures custom, handcrafted log homes and commercial structures targeted primarily for market in the U.S. with smaller markets in Europe and Canada. The diversity of these markets allows the company to keep 70 individuals employed full time year round, and the production sites are booked into 2004.

They train staff on the job and have nine apprentices at work under the new provincial log builder apprenticeship program.

In addition to the local workforce, there is a U.S. sales and design division and construction crew that totals 20 employees, and an expanding sales division in Germany with three employees.

The most obvious project currently in production is the 114,000 square foot log home being built in Williams Lake site south of the city.

Destined for Colorado, the home, which appears to be the biggest log home in North America, will cover an area about the size of three football fields and ranges from three to five stories in different sections.

Reid and Chevigny are always open to opportunities to expand the operations to develop their products related to log construction.

"We are open to doing business and talking to people with unique ideas for expansion and international trade discussions," Reid said.

Reid and Chevigny recently returned from a Canada West Trade Commission to the U.S., which they

attended at the invitation of Prime minister Chretien and Premier Gordon Campbell and Minister Pettigrew. Since attending this trade mission, Reid and Chevigny have been invited to attend another trade mission to Russia and Germany.

Key support staff includes Roy Keats and Donna Fitzel, designers and drafts people who work directly with the customers. Don Gesinger, a local architect, works extensively with Pioneer and has been responsible for the design and plans for the large home under construction.

Head builders are Peter Arnold and Joel Roorda in Williams Lake, Beat Schwaller and Sam Peterson in Soda Creek and Bryan Reid, Jr., Sean Bailey and Mike Watson in 153 Mile. Carey Tugnum heads up human resources, while Stephen Ganguin is expediter. Marcel Therrien heads administration and accounting.