



Cedar Ranch - 2002

107,000 sq ft of magnificent British Columbia Craftsmanship

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Once the the two sections are joined together the home will be well over 107,000 sq ft under one roof, and according Pioneer research, will be the largest log home in North America.

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The Story

In 2000, Pioneer constructed a 27,000 square foot home as an addition to an existing structure for a client in Colorado. After the delivery of the log shell package and related roof package, the customer liked the look of the addition so much that he decided to tear down his original home and have Pioneer Log Homes build an 80,000 square-foot replacement. The design work on this spectacular home is being supplied by local designer Don Gesinger, working closely with André Chevigny, Peter Arnold and the homeowner in Colorado. Once the two sections are joined together the home will be well over 100,000 square feet under one roof, and according to Pioneer research, will be the largest log home in the Western Hemisphere. This huge home is being constructed at the Williams Lake site under the careful eye of master builder Peter Arnold with the assistance of Joel Roorda.

Peter, who came to Canada on the Swiss - Canadian Young Worker Exchange program started with Pioneer in 1994 after completing his schooling and apprenticeship for Heavy Timber Framing and Carpentry in Switzerland. He came to Pioneer to gain knowledge on new construction methods that he could adapt to his existing skills. Peter

has become a Canadian Citizen, and has built his own log home that he, his wife, and two children live in. Peter is constantly creating new tools and techniques that improve on both log construction joinery and safety. He has an amazing ability to see far ahead into the complexity of a building this size, identify and solve problems before they become problems, sometimes involving the creation of new details to make the plan work, and of course the skills to organize his great crew to perform those details.

Joel Roorda, a native of Williams Lake started with Pioneer as a summer student peeling logs while he was attending college. After completing his schooling, Joel pursued an apprenticeship with Pioneer. He is now a Journeyman Carpenter/Log Builder and assists Peter with the day-to-day challenges, executing solutions and paying attention to the special details that a project of this magnitude presents. Joel and his wife are the proud parents of three children.

The network of suppliers and loggers out there looking for this type of log pays off daily. This cedar is the largest supporting structure log that Pioneer has ever used. A second wing in this home has a similar supporting log. Pioneer spent months looking for the real feature post which is to be located in the library. This log needed to be of similar size with the root ball intact. "Our friends in the bush were checking out all the blow down areas for us " says André "I think they get as excited as we do when they are challenged to find that Special log".

The Special log was located in January 2002. After taking three weeks to carefully harvest it from its location deep in the British Columbia forestlands, this 76,000-pound feature log has now arrived in Williams Lake. Pioneer craftsmen will now set to work cleaning it by hand, before placing it to stand and support the 56 ft high ceiling of the library in this grand home.

As to be expected this magnificent home has features rarely seen in private homes and will sit on a foundation of phenomenal proportions, engineered to carry loads such as the triple fireplace in the dining hall which will weigh over 1 million pounds. Many of the footings are 6 feet wide, 14 inches deep, and carry 12-inch thick concrete foundation walls, faced with beautiful stonework at all visible exterior portions.

Entering through the pair of 6-foot wide, 12-foot high entry doors one enters a space 40-foot by 48-foot flanked by twin staircases each occupying a 16-foot x 32-foot space. The focus of this entry is a 706-year old cedar post, which rises 57 feet to the entry ridge above. An interesting assembly of log beams, purlins, and braces are mortised into this post with the craftsmanship for which Pioneer is known.

Opposite the entry and open on the entry side is the 25-foot by 40-foot Mountain Room, with its 24-foot ceiling, custom-built 30-foot wide and 22-foot high bay window, and a pair of matching Tulikivi fireplaces. The view out the bay window of the 11,000 feet high Colorado Mountains is spectacular.

Turning left from the entry one passes the Bar and Billiard room area, a mostly open-plan space of 25-foot x 68-foot with bathroom facilities and an elevator opposite the

hallway. The hallway itself is in scale with the rest of the house in that it is over 14-feet wide and over 200 feet long.

At the North end of the hallway sits the first phase of this project with four levels of living space and includes the 48-foot x 70-foot great room with its 38-foot high cathedral ceiling supported by an impressive cluster of log posts, beams, valleys, and braces that leaves most visitors awestruck. This section has its own entry with a 28-foot by 55-foot covered portico where visitors can park under cover in inclement weather.

Returning back along the hallway and past the main entry one comes upon the first kitchen which is 25-feet by 48-feet with a 16-foot by 25-foot adjoining pantry, another custom - built bay window 24 feet wide by 12 feet high and its own fireplace sitting space where Pioneer's log work blends with the fine stonework the owner is providing. Opposite this kitchen is another bathroom and sitting area. The next feature along the hallway is a massive stone staircase on the left descending to the basement level, balanced by a finely crafted wood staircase on the right going up to the library landing one half flight above. Straight ahead is another six-foot diameter cedar log post soaring unbroken to the dining hall ridge 48 feet above.

The dining hall itself is 40-feet by 80-feet with a surrounding post and beam structure that is truly amazing. Cedar posts 24 feet high and up to 4-feet in diameter at the base rise up to a roof structure supported by massive log trusses based on the traditional "Hammerhead" design, but adapted and modified by the Pioneer team to accommodate giant flared cedar butts as the central hanging posts. The main view wall of the dining hall has approximately 1,200 square foot of glass including custom glass doors opening onto a partially covered deck 60 feet by 60 feet. At one end of the dining hall is the twenty-six foot wide triple fireplace with three 6-foot high firebox openings.

The library west of the dining hall is one-half flight up (which in this house equals 10 feet) and is the location of the main feature post. As big as this house is, this post, at a minimum of 10 feet in diameter at the base, will truly seem big. The library has another custom fireplace, more covered deck space, and a surrounding balcony accessible from a spiral staircase, and leading upward from the library balcony is a series of lofts hung in the roof space above the 48-foot high dining ridge. The entire library space has a cathedral ceiling and the supporting systems of log posts, beams, purlins, and braces are exposed to view from below.

Continuing on in the same direction one comes to the 2nd kitchen beyond the dining hall with 2,600 square feet of state-of-the-art food preparation equipment including side by side walk in cooler and freezer, a dumbwaiter, and a pair of 3 foot by 20 foot islands. Also included is a complete baking centre. Doors lead to another covered deck off of this kitchen.

Above this 2nd kitchen is a 30-foot by 60-foot study with its own loft and covered deck. Indeed, private covered decks abound on the second floor, which features a master bedroom suite of 1,600 square foot with a 16-foot by 32-foot bath (with deck), a 20-foot

by 40-foot walk in closet, and a 26-foot by 30-foot loft with its own breathtaking mountain view.

Attention to detail is a Pioneer Log Home focus and the remaining seven bedrooms on the second floor level all have special interest items where the log structure is part of the room and the occupant can appreciate the beauty of the natural logs, as well as, the carefulness of the joinery. Also on the second floor and adjacent to the massive main entry post begins the central staircase which winds past the third floor bedrooms and ends at the 10 foot by 20 foot covered lookout on the roof. This lookout is 72 feet above the lawn below and leads to twin ridge walkways that extend 40 feet in either direction.

As to be expected, the basement level of this home also features some massive log detailing as one walks through from the theatre to the games room, on to the basement bar and along to the bowling area. The bowling area has its own seating area for onlookers and the two lanes of bowling, as well as, the pinsetter are framed by a non-structural wood post and beam structure. Also included in the basement are a multi-level wine cellar, with temperature and humidity control, a basketball court, an archery area, and a 32-foot by 60-foot gym.

The log work for this amazing home at Pioneer's Williams Lake facility is expected to wrap up by April 2002. Once completed, the home will then be dismantled and carefully loaded onto an estimated 65 to 70 trucks. At its final destination in Colorado, the reassembly will be completed by Pioneer's U.S. affiliated workers and a small Canadian specialty crew from the Pioneers' Williams Lake site, under the supervision of Bryan Reid Sr., who supervises the majority of Pioneer's log sets around the world.