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Ideas ~

You have an idea of the timber frame home you will build. Together we will build on your ideas to create a well designed home.

Craftsmanship ~ We skillfully combine our design talents and our joiners craft to create a true handcrafted home.

Naturally ~ We combine green building practices and products to help you create a natural home.



Homestead Journal
Writings by Bruce Gardner

Career Opportunities

Somehow we managed to skip our usual Spring Quarterly newsletter, but there's good reason. We've been busy and growing! As you will see within our spanking NEW newsletter, we've added some interesting NEW people to our staff and we have NEW fresh projects on the boards. Read on to find out what we've been up to and remember – you're always welcome to visit our shop if you're spending any time traveling on I-40 heading either east or west to enjoy the southern highlands. Summertime is here! Safe Travels!

The Arbor



I have practiced the craft of timber framing for a good, long while now. Through the years I have worked for many fine people on many fine projects. Timber framing projects come in all shapes and sizes, from a small porch for a residence to rather large public buildings. I even once built a timber framed outhouse with a stained glass window. Last week I was asked which project was my favorite. The easy answer is "Yours." The truthful answer is ***The Arbor***.

In many small Southern communities a meeting place was often first defined by clearing the trees and stacking the brush to form loose wind breaks as walls. These meeting places came to be known as brush arbors. As the community or congregation grew the trees were converted to timbers and a more permanent meeting hall would be constructed. The meeting hall so built in 1834 in Maiden, North Carolina was simply known as The Arbor - created from hand hewn timbers.

The Arbor measured 70 feet by 70 feet. Built-in benches provided seating for 500 people. As the years passed a graveyard was situated next to The Arbor and eventually a brick church was added. For the next 155 years The Arbor served the community as a place of worship, a meeting hall for the community, a chapel for weddings and funerals, and a geographic touchstone for the entire town. Maiden, North Carolina sees her share of strong storms, heavy snows, and even an occasional seismic event. Through it all The Arbor, with her huge timbers pegged together, may have rocked a bit but continued to shelter the community until 1989. The week after Hurricane Hugo went through (which she survived) a vagrant accidentally set her afire. To the ground she burned save for one charred section of a timber post, brace, and girt.

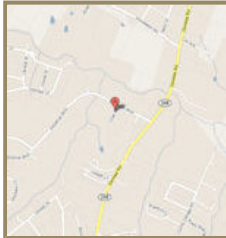
That next year a retired North Carolina Architect named J. L. Beam called to ask if I would be interested in building a public building in Maiden, North Carolina. In our first meeting Mr. Beam handed me a set of old photographs taken by an architecture class and pointed to the small pile of charred remains. "Can you build us another one?" he asked. "Yes sir, I can." I replied and I set to work.

Our first task was to draw the entire building to scale, combining the measurements of the

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charred timbers with the structure shown in the old photographs. The oak timbers in the original were huge--octagonal posts 16 inches square by 24 feet long, rafters 8 inches by 12 inches by 20 feet in length. I scoured three states to find the timbers we needed. We built jigs and patterns to guide our work. Each day brought new challenges and a new respect for our elders who had built the first Arbor with axes, froes, adzes, and hand saws. In January of 1991 we loaded three tractor-trailer rigs with the finished timbers and journeyed to Maiden.

Work on the jobsite started as most jobs do: stage the site, inventory materials, and assemble timbers in a planned order. The atmosphere quickly changed, however, as car after car rolled up, disgorging passengers and lawn chairs. The days were cold and rainy, but our crew was young, dressed for the weather, and our work kept us warm. The assembled spectators were not young and many were not properly dressed. And of course they were not active, only watching. Some bundled up in



blankets and shawls. Over the course of a few days our spectator population grew to some 200 souls. Most stayed for the duration. None interrupted our work with questions and they rarely exchanged more than a greeting among themselves. They just silently watched. Their silence was broken only when I called for an occasional break.

It came to be our habit, mine and our spectators, that during each break someone summoned me. "Come with me boy. I want to show you something", an old man on a walker

would say. Together we would walk slowly into the graveyard and stop at a grave stone. "Maude Evans" the marker said. "This is my wife." my guide explained. "We were married in The Arbor in 1931. We held her funeral services in The Arbor in 1985. Thank you for giving us our Arbor back." One lady, old beyond guessing at, caught my elbow in a firm grip and simply marched off with me. "This is my boy." she said. "We held his funeral in The Arbor. He died in 1944." The gravestone said "Lieutenant William Cottrell. Born 1922--Died 1944". And so it went. Each day I learned of funerals and christenings and marriages. And each day my simple craft became less and less a business and more and more the one thing I can do for people. Oh, I must make a living at my craft for that is how one gains permission to continue. But mostly I make buildings. Many of those buildings touch people's lives. And some of those buildings touch my life such that I am reminded that I have been given a great gift that I did not earn and do not deserve. I may never build another building like The Arbor, but I shall always be looking for it. When it comes it will come as a surprise. And old people will climb out of cars to pull lawn chairs from the trunk and watch quietly.



Come see us when you can.

Bruce Gardner

New Projects on the Boards

Our growing company now has two full time busy designers working on some wonderful and varied projects.

The "Outback Timber Frame" – Future owners of this wonderful square house plan with surround porches will benefit from the energy efficiency of this design. The desire is for no air

conditioning so the design calls for a windowed tower to draw air through the house with the help of ceiling fans. Set nicely in the edge of the woods for the shade and overlooking two small lakes with fields beyond, this home will be a restful retreat for years to come.

Addition overlooking a waterfall – A two story cabin already stood next to a flowing stream dropping down into the river below, but the owners desired their private retreat within the home to be closer in order to hear the “falling water lullaby”. Also included in this design is a master bathroom shower opening up onto the private porch with great views of the river below.

Mountain Retreat – Several generations of a family will call this stone and wood sided timber frame cabin their favorite place to gather on a bluff overlooking the Tennessee valley below. Lots of porches have been asked for, but the footprint needs to be “small and charming”. Elements will include some of the guidelines as stated ... “The architectural style was drawn from a combination of historic style influences and modern forms. The styles influencing the guidelines are Adirondack, Rural Gothic and Tennessee vernacular styles. Contemporary forms not typically found in these styles, such as curved or angled walls, more extensive use of glass, or towers, may be combined with these historic influences.” We look forward to working with our clients to design and build their dream home get away.

Italian/French/Tennessee Home with a Modern Twist – This project is fun! Combining a “bleached” timber frame with an Italian courtyard surrounded with lots of glass and tile will make this home one of a kind. Set on a large lake here in Cumberland County, this family of four (two young boys) will take pleasure knowing they have an energy efficient home built with the sun, shade, and views tailored just right. Included is an enclosed “endless pool” room, three car garage with guest apartment above and an RV garage.

New People in the Shop and in the Office



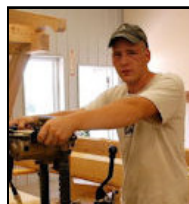
David Smith has been our sole Designer for the past four months. With nearly 20 years experience in designing and drafting residential homes as well as commercial projects, he brings to our company a wealth of ideas which helps make our projects what we desire them to be. David is an excellent listener and can help you get your ideas down on paper in a relaxing visit.



Troy Campbell hails from northern Vermont where he's worked with the craft of timber framing for the past 10 years. He's skilled in design, layout, joinery, and raisings. We're excited to have him join our company as he continues his passion for timber framing in the shop. Troy will have the opportunity to use all his skills as our company grows.



Steven Clapp was infatuated with timber framing in high school and even came up to spend the day with us on his 18th birthday – his gift to himself. Now he is working with us full time as a joiner while designing his own self sufficient timber frame cabin to live in on land where he grows most everything he eats. Learning the craft is a life long adventure and Steven is ready for it to begin.



Adam Jones was raised just an hour north of the shop and loves working with his hands. Timber framing was new to him when he joined our shop, but now that he's been to a nice timber frame raising, he's decided it's the “best thing since sliced bread”. Adam will graduate with a construction degree the end of summer and we're happy he's come on board to be involved in an even older form of building – one that lasts MUCH longer.



Grayson Houston is our newest Client Representative. Knoxville, TN is his hometown and he joined us with a fair amount of knowledge timber framing as a project manager for a larger company. With his wide array of experience in the construction industry combined with a love of what we do, you will be fortunate to work with him to purchase a Homestead Timber Frames home.



Mack Guffey is not new to our company as he was hired as our Designer over a year ago. Mack has expanded his role in the company and now divides his time in a dual role as Designer and as Client Representative. Mack's outgoing personality coupled with his years of design experience in an architecture firm give him a unique perspective on how a timber frame home functions, how it is built, and how much it costs. We are confident you will

enjoy working with Mack as much as we do.

What's going on out in the field!



The Hartigan Pergola – This pergola compliments a handsome four car garage which faces south. Upon completion of this, Mr. Hartigan sent us a lovely note:

“Just a note to say thanks for a great job. The Pergola is well designed, constructed and we love it. Your



staff was great to work with and the guys in the field were friendly, courteous, neat, and knowledgeable, a unique combination in the construction field. I worked 35 years in construction and found very few trades people who exhibit these qualifications. Your guys were true craftsmen.”

Thank you,
R.J. Hartigan

What more can we say.....



The Hannah's Great Room and Pool House – Two nice projects in one! Just west of Nashville, the Hannah family is building their dream home. They contracted us to build a nice hammer beam Great Room for the center portion of their home as well as the roof system and exterior bent for their pool house. Finished photos should come later this year, so keep our web

site on your favorites.



Our Fall raisings included two homes that the families have just moved into. We'll be getting some fresh photos very soon to share on our web site by summers end.

In the very near future, we will be raising the **Baker Frame** in Rock Island, TN – a handsome two story addition with a screened in cypress porch; and the **Vaughn Frame** near Lake Cumberland in Kentucky – a hybrid timber frame Great Room/Kitchen for a young family building their dream home. Call the office (931-484-7059) for more info if you wish to attend either of these raisings.

The Role of a Client Representative at HTF

Daily, when I meet someone new, I introduce myself and answer their first question even before they ask it; which is, "What do you do?" I am a Client Representative for Homestead Timber Frames. Usually I can quickly and succinctly explain what Homestead Timber Frames is but then I stumble over a quick explanation of what a Client Representative at Homestead does. Sometimes I reply, "Anything and everything", or answer their question with a question, "What do you want done?"

These are not snide or brusque remarks. They are sincere replies. Unlike a Surgeon, Police Officer or even an Agent; the job title of Client Representative, like the job itself, is ambiguous. This vagueness is intrinsic to the fact that my job varies from client to client and from project to project. I work for our clients to bridge the gap between their project's conception to its successful completion.

I am here to assist in property inquires or the determination of which species of wood is the best choice for their new timber frame. I routinely conceptualize plans, evaluate and recommend contractors, specify project sub-systems or even coordinate the delivery of materials to the job sites that were provided by other vendors. Clients use me as a source for

budgeting and 'value engineering'. I even help our clients locate rare or reclaimed building materials.

Bruce Gardner recently wrote to one of our clients, "He has a lifetime of construction experience and knowledge in specifying, selling, and managing building projects...Grayson is diligent without being overbearing and helpful to a fault".

Mr. and Mrs. Client allow me to introduce myself; I am Grayson Houston, your Homestead Timber Frame Client Representative. I am your partner in the process of 'getting it built right' and 'getting it built your way'.

To the original question: What do I do? My sincere reply is, what do you want done?

Look forward to hearing from you!



Grayson Houston

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