

Building a Log Cabin



Contained on this and following pages is a pictorial display of a 2-story log cabin house and adjacent 2-story garage recently built in the woods of North Florida, USA. The home was built by two people - Clyde and Rosemary - without the help of contractors or hired help. Clyde has worked full-time during most of the construction period, so only a few days of the week are available to work on the house. The home is built from logs bought at BK Cypress, Bronson, FL. This photo shows what the house looked like from the front in February, 1998.

This page was updated in early 1999 for the final time!

Construction Photo Album

THE HOUSE IS FINISHED (This web site is also finished)!!

Final projects finished (Nov 1998), FINAL ENTRY: (This is the last entry). Time from start to finish: approximately 4 years, 9 months! Furniture was taken out of storage in the adjacent garage and moved to the house. Unpacking and make the home a real home took place during November and December. Before that:

The 1st floor is installed, sanded and sealed. The stair steps were also finished along with the flooring. The baseboard and shoeing were also installed. This makes everything done.

Due to the large number of pictures and size of the photos, the pages are broken into several parts. Because the nature of the pages, it is advised to read all sections in the order given. The introduction section is a must.

- [Introduction/Background info](#)
- [The Garage](#)
- [Sub-floor and related \(House\)](#)
- [1st Floor logs](#)
- [2nd floor logs, floor and porch](#)
- [Support beams](#)
- [Roof support](#)
- [Roof](#)
- [Chimney](#)
- [Interior walls - early](#)
- [Interior walls - finished](#)
- [Inside construction](#)
- [Uncataloged photos](#) **UPDATED with 'final' photos**

For comments or questions, email *afn33887 at afn.org*

See also: [Music arrangements of James Gilbert](#)
[Music lessons available in the Gainesville, FL area](#)

Introductory Material

[\[Return to main building page\]](#) [\[Go to Next section\]](#) [mail afn33887 at afn.org]

The pages that make up this web site show a pictorial display of a 2-story log cabin house and adjacent 2-story garage built in the woods of North Florida. **Be sure to visit the main page for more pictures and information.**

The building of the house was officially declared finished on November 1, 1998 exactly five years to the day that the owners/builders moved to the property. The completion date was delayed several times during the construction process. The house is **not** a kit home. The logs are from BK Cypress, Bronson, FL and are made from cypress that are milled by BK. *No contractors or hired help were utilized in the construction process.* From time to time relatives and friends help but for the most part it is a two person construction project.



Left and Right front portion of the property. The property extends in the left picture about where the curve in the road starts, across the street from where the photo was taken, and goes to the right picture just past the intersection on the left side.

The **garage** was completed - to the point that the zoning department said it was done - during weekend trips before the builders moved to the area. The primary **home construction** started in November of 1993 with the logs being delivered in January 1994. The interior of the garage still needs some interior work while the house was finally finished at the end of October, 1998. As with any project of this size, money (or the lack of it) and changes to initial design plans were significant problems to it being completed any sooner.

Creek/Drainage ditch. The creek runs



through the property and is mainly a drainage ditch for the roads. Due to improper grading of the nearby roads, a great deal of sand has washed into the creek, filling it until another big rush of water washes it downstream. (This has helped to fill parts of the property that were low). This photo is a winter view. During the summer it is almost impossible to see much past the creek due to the foliage. You will notice the difference in several pictures. Between mid-December 1997 and early April, 1998 the creek flowed non-stop, sometimes rather fast and has re-routed itself downstream from this picture.



Email any comments or questions to: [afn33887 at afn.org](mailto:afn33887@afn.org)

Tool and construction manufacturers: One of your tools was probably used on this house. If you'd like to advertise that fact, advertising space is available.

[\[Go to Main Section\]](#) [\[Go to Next section\]](#)

The Log Cabin construction

The Garage is built first

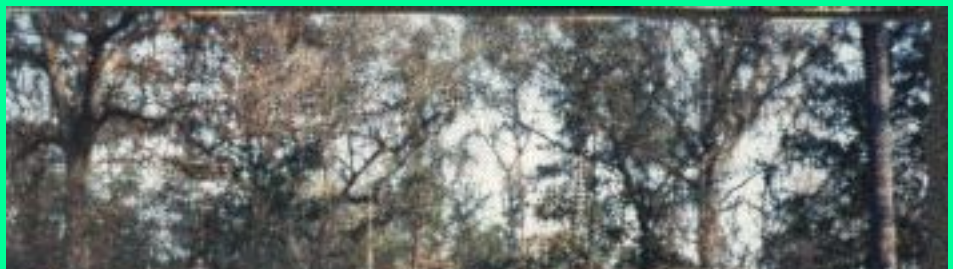
[\[Return to main building page\]](#) [\[Go to Next section\]](#) [\[Questions/Comments\]](#)

Before anything was built. Slightly to the left of center is the location that will house the garage. To the right, slightly out of camera view is the location of the house (not yet started in this picture). The tree that hugs the right side of the picture is located just off the back edge of the house. The house is being built from logs bought from BK Cypress, Bronson, FL. **Be sure to visit the main page for more pictures and information.**



The slab. The outline of where the slab for the garage floor. The garage is a simple frame building and not nearly as complex as the house will be. Leaning against the tree in the background is a much needed item on a construction site - the outhouse. The area behind and to the left of the tree is where the septic tank and drain field are located. The garage (which has a 2nd floor apartment) provided a temporary living place during the construction of the house.

Walls are put up. The garage is a 2 story garage with the 2nd story designed as a loft apartment. It is

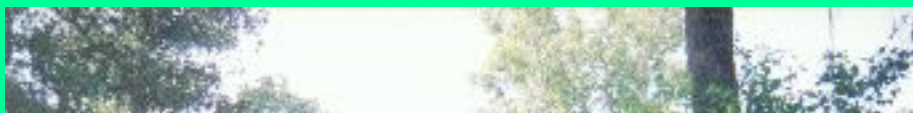


already anticipated that the loft/apartment will be finished with the existing kitchen being re-done and external stairs installed in place of the inside stairs and the bathroom will be moved/added upstairs.



2nd floor is put up. As with the house, the 2nd floor roof slopes such that the walls only go up about 3 feet along the walls. The garage loft has a normal height ceiling where the house will have an open beam ceiling.

2nd floor and roof beams. The garage will have a tin roof.





Finished outside of garage. The outside of the garage has a log facade to match the look of the real logs of which the house are made. The interior of the garage, which includes a bathroom and a small kitchen are not included in these pictures. Many of the house pictures were taken from the left-most 2nd story window of the garage shown in this picture.

Back of the garage. A view of the back of the garage. In this view the house would be barely visible between the tree and the left edge of the garage.



[\[Go to Main Section\]](#) [\[Go to Next section\]](#)

Log Cabin construction

Sub-flooring

[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Go to Previous section\]](#) [\[Go to Next section\]](#) [\[Questions/Comments\]](#)

Pictures of the foundation and block laying were not available. Thus, pictures begin with the construction of the main floor supports. For reference information, the front door of the house is south center, and the back porch is the northern side of the house. The garage is located off of the northwest corner of the house. Many pictures are taken from the garage and show the western or northwestern side of the house. The building is to be built with logs from **BK Cypress, Bronson, FL. Be sure to visit the main page for more pictures and information.**



Floor support

These beams will support the first floor and the larger beams will support the internal walls and much of the weight of the building. This view is looking from about where the living room will be toward the northeast corner.

Nailing the sub-floor

Here is Rosemary nailing in the plywood that will become the sub-floor for the first floor.



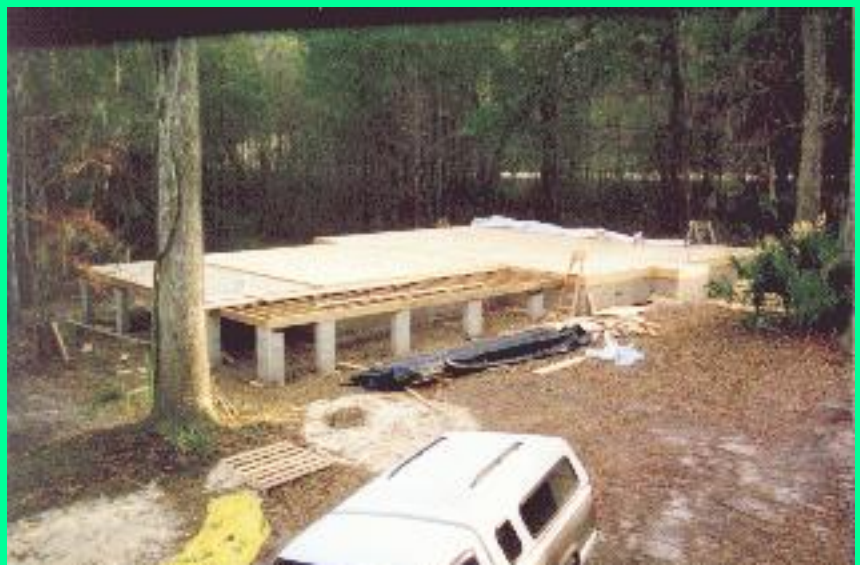


Sub-floor

Some of the support blocks can be seen in this picture. The portion of the house that is not complete is part of the back/side porch which raps around from the west center and goes full across the northern/back side of the house.

Another view of the sub-floor

Viewed from the 2nd floor of the garage is a view of the entire house showing the almost completed sub-flooring.





Sealer

Here is a view of a water sealer being sprayed over the entire sub-flooring. Since the log walls and roof took *six months or more* it was absolutely necessary to put some sort of sealer on the sub-flooring in order to protect it from the elements. A better view of the back/side porch and the support blocks can be seen. The white blur to the left of the picture, under the porch is the exiting sewer line.

Sewer line

Here is the view under the house with Clyde shown checking out the sewer line connection. For over three years the exiting sewer line ended at the back porch until the pipe was layed back to join the garage's line near the septic tank. (See previous pictures).



Log Cabin Construction

First Floor logs and porch

[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Go to Previous section\]](#) [\[Go to Next section\]](#) [\[Questions/Comments\]](#)

This section contains pictures from the 1st floor and porch construction. **Be sure to visit the main page for more pictures and information.**



Big enough saw?

Here is a picture of the logs being cut with a saw that had to be specially purchased for the job. This is NOT a kit home. Simply put, Clyde and Rosemary went to the sawmill (BK Cypress Logs, Bronson, FL) and gave them the house plans and a bunch of logs were delivered (as seen in other pictures). All the logs have to be cut to compensate for corner pieces and special situations, such as windows and door.

Lifting the logs

As you can imagine, these 8, 10 or 12 foot cypress logs weigh a lot, even when cut to smaller sizes. Here a relative who came to visit and got drafted into building guides a log onto the porch. The device being used to lift the logs was designed by



Clyde and consists of an engine chain/motorized hoist attached to the swinging arm.



The lifter

A closer look at the lifter. This was used to get the logs up to the 1st floor level, which is raised above the ground level. Another contraption was invented to handle raising the logs above the 3 or four foot mark.

Logs are laid

This shows the first bunch of logs being layed. Note the pile of logs in the foreground.





Front door

This shows the front door frame.



More logs

More logs are layed and frames done.



Pantry door frame

The pantry door frame,
located at the northeast side
of the building leading out to
the rear porch.

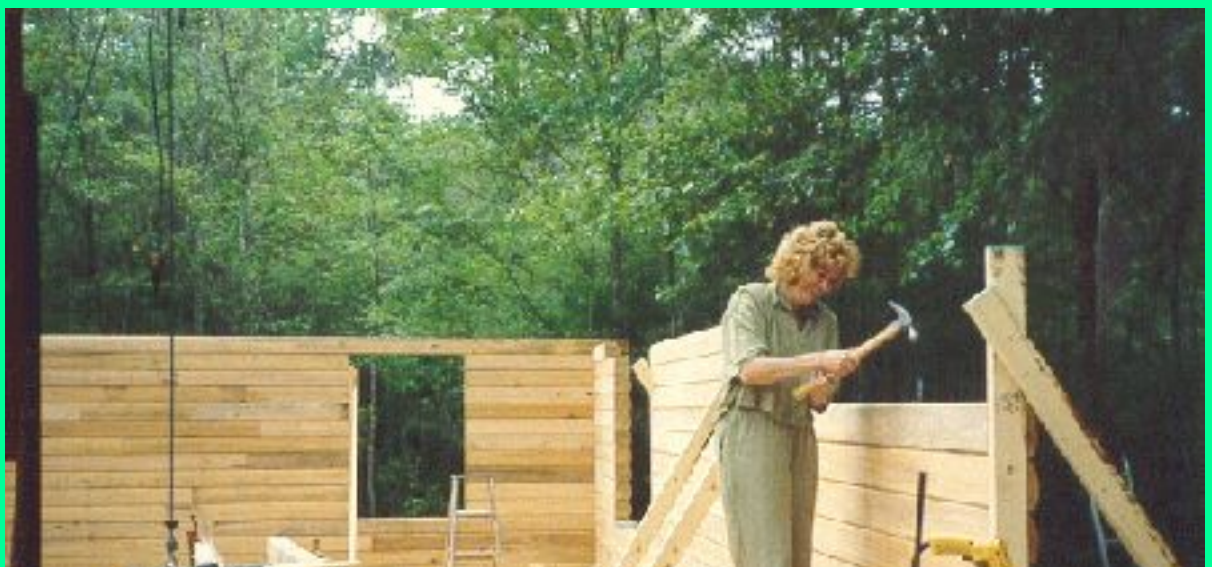


Windows frames

This shows all the first floor logs
up to the top of all the windows.
Note also door frames and
window frame supports are in
place as is the basic frame for
the fireplace.

A helping hand

Friends who came to
visit and see how
things were going
were often in for a
surprise when they
were drafted to help
with the building.
That's a 6" spike being



driven into the log to
nail it into place.

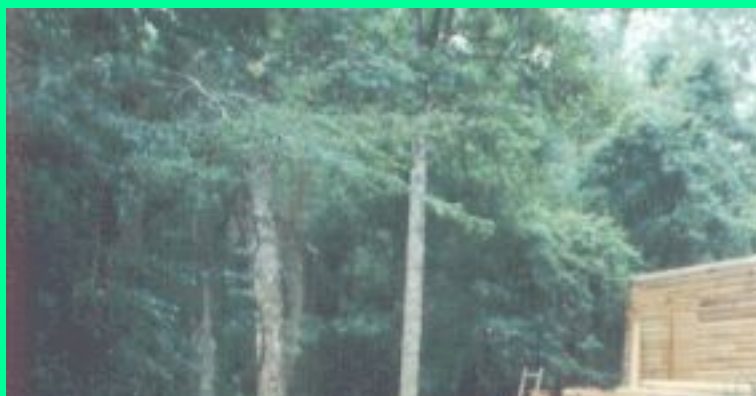


Back view

This shows the back, northeast corner of the house at the point where there is one log above all of the window and door frames. The door in the foreground is the door to the pantry.

View from the driveway

To the left of the picture in the very far background is the garage. To the right is the house, about at the same point of construction as the last photo.



Water Line

This shows the water line running from the garage - where the water filter is located - to the main house.



Front door, looking in

The frame for the stairs as seen from what would be the front door. You can also see some of the inside first floor walls.





Nice spot to rest?

One of their cats rests on the top of the chimney frame. The story is told that this same cat, as conjectured by evidence on the scene, laid on top of a log a little further up than this that wasn't nailed in, fell asleep and started to

fall. As she tried to grab the log to keep from falling, she pulled the log down with her. She was dazed but apparently not seriously injured and is still going strong, although she can't lie on top of the logs any more.

[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Go to Next section\]](#)

Log Cabin Construction

Second Floor start

[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Go to Previous section\]](#) [\[Go to Next section\]](#) [\[Questions/Comments\]](#)

This section shows pictures of the beginning of the 2nd floor construction. **Be sure to visit the main page and see all the steps of construction and other details.**

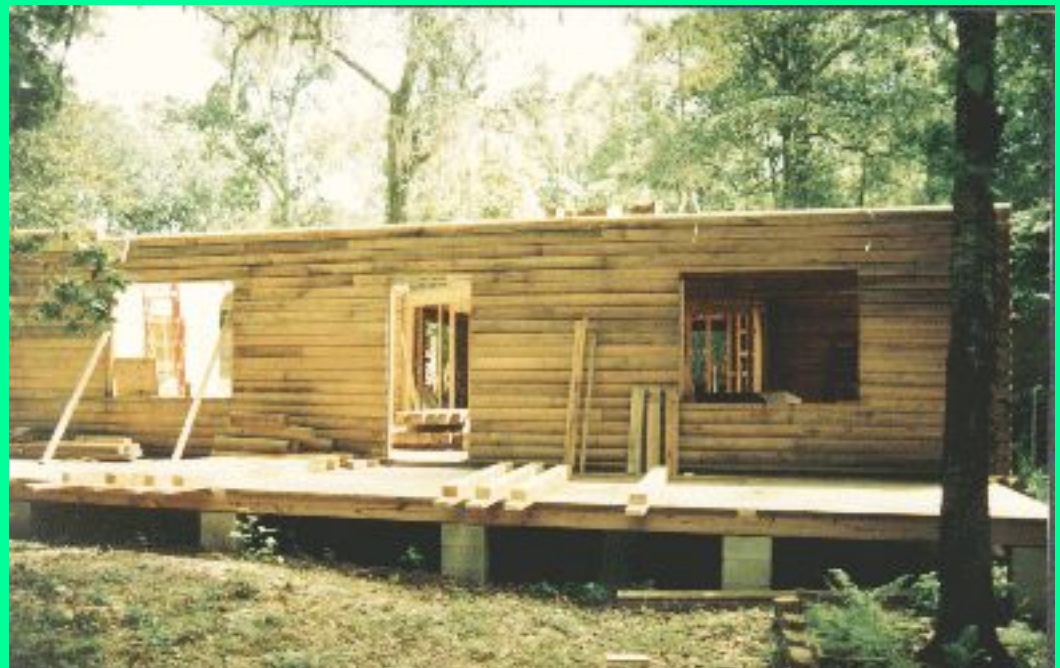


2nd Floor

The 2nd floor is put in. This is the final floor, not a sub floor or temporary floor. As the roof was not put on for several months after this, the 2nd floor required sanding to get rid of mildew and crud. Over 1,000 screws were used to screw the floor in place.

Front View

Looking at the front of the house from the southeast side.





Another front view

Looking at the front of the house from the southwest side with the photographer standing in the driveway.



Porch start

Here the start of the back porch begins. The porches had to be done at the same time as the 2nd floor was put in.



2nd Floor and porch

The 2nd floor can be seen here as the beams to the back porch go in. The porch roof beams will join in at this level and have to be done before any of the 2nd floor logs can be put up around





the porch area.

Chimney frame

Here is the chimney frame. On the outside of this will go tar paper and Florida field and stone masonry work. Note Clyde inside the chimney.





Front porch

Here the beams to hold the front porch are put in place.

Back porch beams

Here the back porch has its posts and roof beams in place. The chimney frame has its tarpaper on.



Living room

Here the last logs beside the triangle windows go in place. The living room is a cathedral ceiling.



Lifting logs

One of the sons of the owners helps lift logs from the living room up to the 2nd floor. Note the contraption being used to lift the logs. It was invented by Clyde to help lift the logs. Once again, the engine hoist/



chain is
being used.



Cathedral Ceiling

More 2nd floor level logs get placed in the living room. Notice that the triangle windows are already installed. They are fixed windows that will not open. Picture is taken from the 2nd floor balcony. The triangle windows and the curved windows below required the use of a chainsaw to cut through the logs. Another contraption is being used to lift the logs. The big opening at the bottom is the fireplace opening and is a little over 6' high. The opening itself will not end up being that big and will be covered in by the fireplace workings and log facades as needed.

Rear window frame

The rear window frame for the
2nd floor north bedroom.





All logs are up
This shows all the logs completed. The next step is the installation of the roof support beams.

[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Go to Next section\]](#)

Log Cabin Construction

Roof support beams

[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Go to Previous section\]](#) [\[Go to Next section\]](#) [\[Questions/Comments\]](#)

This section contains pictures of the roof support beams, the step before the roof can be put on. **Be sure to visit the main page for more pictures and information.**





Here construction for the supports for the roof are put in place.



Center support
The ladder shown extends from the first floor level and provides a way for the builders to put in the support posts for the point where the 3 roof beams join as shown in the previous 2 photos.



Other support frame

The support frame for the beams that will go on that side of the house can be seen. The frame is in the area where the 2nd floor bathroom is.



The Crane

One of the few times where outside help has been required. Remember the invention used to lift logs from before? That was tried to lift the roof beams. It didn't work so a crane had to be brought in as shown in this photo.

Beam 1

The first beam that will



hold the roof is put in place.



Beam 2

Another support beam is put in place

Another beam

Another beam is laid. From the angle of the photo it looks like the photographer wanted to be as far from the action as possible in case the beam can falling down.





Final beam

The final beam is placed.



Cross beams

The cross beams, as seen on the front side of the house, get put in place and the construction of the roof can soon start.





[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Go to Next section\]](#)

Log Cabin Construction

The Roof, support part

[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Go to Previous section\]](#) [\[Go to Next section\]](#) [\[Questions/Comments\]](#)

This section contains pictures of the first part of the roof being built. **Be sure to visit the main page for more pictures and information.**



Beams go in

An early look at the roof support as the beams start to go up.

Valley Ridge

A view looking from the T of the roof down toward the side porch.





Support point

Point where the three main beams and two lesser beams meet. Note the large metal bolts.



Living room roof

A look from the 1st floor living room's cathedral ceiling.





2nd Floor

A look from the back (north) bedroom towards the staircase showing the beams and roof support and a little more to the left showing the bathroom area.



More beams

More beams wait to be put on. (Is that a broom in her hand?)



Cathedral ceiling

Another view, this time looking toward the front (south) side of the house from the living room and its cathedral ceiling.



Roof starts

The actual roof part starts to get put up over the front section of the house.

More roof

More of the roof, this time over the kitchen (portion



going away from camera).



[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Go to Next section\]](#)

Log Cabin Construction

The Roof

[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Go to Previous section\]](#) [\[Go to Next section\]](#) [\[Questions/Comments\]](#)

More pictures of the roof as it was being built. **Be sure to visit the main page for more pictures and information.**

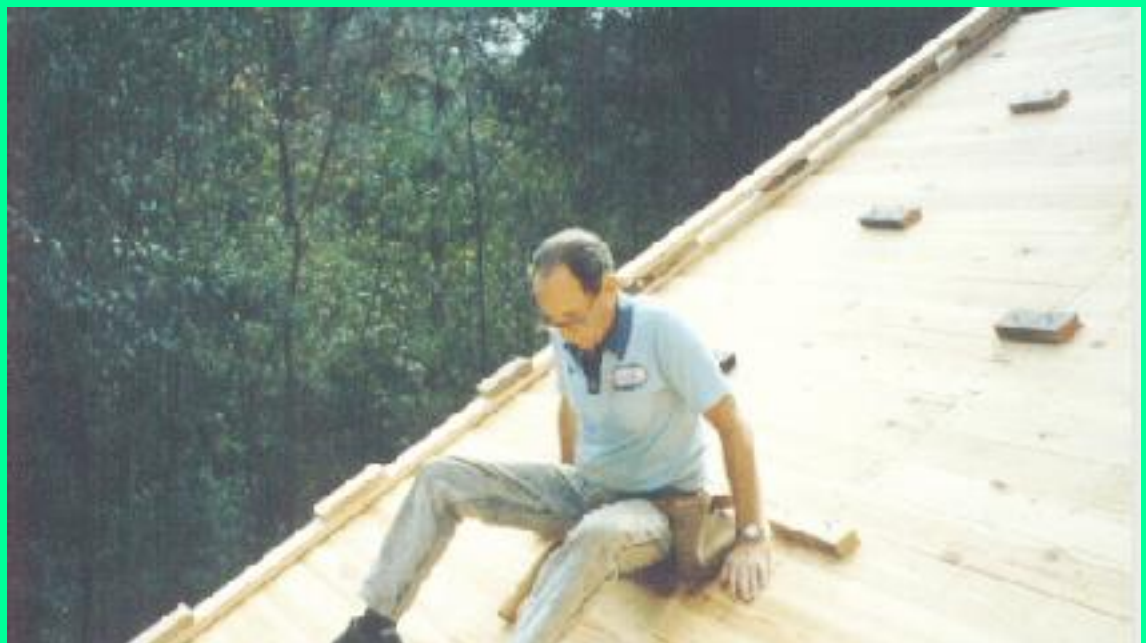


Sewer Vent

The sewer vent and one of the only pictures on the right (northeast) side of the roof.

Checking things

Checking the work (and trying to figure out how to get down without slipping).





More roof

The builder's sons help with the roof pieces.



A slide?

A look at the valley ridge over the kitchen porch (west center of house at camera's position).



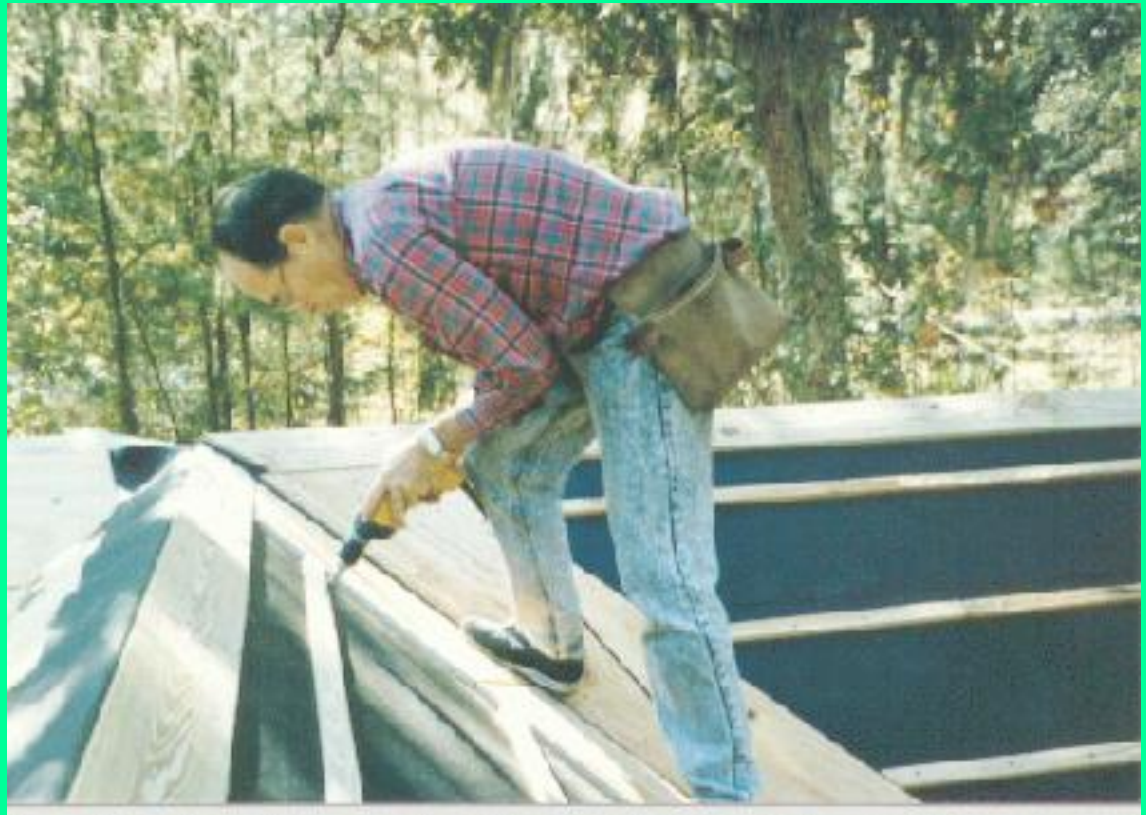


Tar paper

Tar paper has been laid on this section and the strips of wood to which the tin will be screwed in are coming into place. Here Clyde measures the last piece of the all important valley ridge.

More strips

More strips of wood get put up.



Roof side

A view of the roof from outside the north window looking toward the east side of the building (directions based on one looking at the house from the front door. Eg. The front door is south). The wood gets cut to an even spacing, a specific distance from the side of the house.



Tin goes up

Tin being put on. Notice Clyde is dressed for warm weather in this picture but at the beginning of the roof series, he is dressed for cold weather. Yes, it took that long to do all of this.



Skylights

A closeup view of the northeast corner of the house showing the bathroom skylight. This photo was taken from the skylight



located in the northern
bedroom.

Last of the tin

The last of the tin is
dragged up to the roof by
Clyde.



[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Next section\]](#)

Log Cabin Construction

The Chimney Outside

[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Go to Previous section\]](#) [\[Go to Next section\]](#) [\[Questions/Comments\]](#)

This section contains pictures of the outside of the chimney. The chimney is attached to the log home that was built with logs from BK Cypress, Bronson, FL. **Be sure to visit the main page for more pictures and information.**



Stones and Sand

The 5 1/2 tons of Florida field stone and rock as well as 2 tons of special sand to be used in the mixing of the mortar is delivered. The stones had to be broken up with a sledge hammer in order to get small enough (and light enough) stones to go on the chimney.

Chimney base

The base of the chimney on which all 5 tons or so of rock will sit.





More chimney base

Stones and scaffolding

Side view of the chimney after a few days work. Approximately 2 rows of stone, all the way around the chimney could be done for each day of work. The lowest outside temperature had to be over 50 (F) so the winter months sometimes prevented us from working. (Fortunately, in this part of Florida, that was only a month or so of not being able to work).





Bucket by bucket

Stones are lifted up bucket by bucket. The mortar is also lifted bucket by bucket. Note make-shift platforms and plastic to prevent mortar from falling on existing stone.



Overview

An overview of the 1/2 way point.





Almost done

Look carefully at the top of the chimney. Clyde is **in** it lifting stone and mortar as he works toward finishing the stone. The chimney has since been finished. The interior flue pipe and top to the chimney is on and inspected.

[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Next section\]](#)

Log Cabin Construction

Early Interior

[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Go to Previous section\]](#) [\[Go to Next section\]](#) [\[Questions/Comments\]](#)

This section contains pictures of the inside of the house, from the early stage of framing to mostly completed sections. **Be sure to visit the main page for more pictures and information.**



Stair & wall frames

Clyde's son, James (yours truly) comes down the stairs. In the background one can see the framing of parts of the 1st and 2nd floor walls.

Master Bedroom

The master bedroom looking toward the bathroom and pantry.





2nd floor

A look from the room above the master bedroom looking toward the back of the house.

2nd floor closet

Second floor closet looking from the back bedroom toward the living room. Note how the floor doesn't look so great.





2nd floor plumbing

A look from the back bedroom toward the bathroom. Notice the plumbing in the wall and the claw-foot bathtub being stored in the bathroom.

Floor

Sanding the 2nd floor floor. This was necessary due to the floor being exposed to the elements for so long.



[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Next section\]](#)

Log Cabin Construction

More Interior

[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Go to Previous section\]](#) [\[Next section\]](#) [\[Questions/Comments\]](#)

This section contains pictures of the inside of the house, from the early stages to the beginning of interior framing. **Be sure to visit the main page for more pictures and information.**

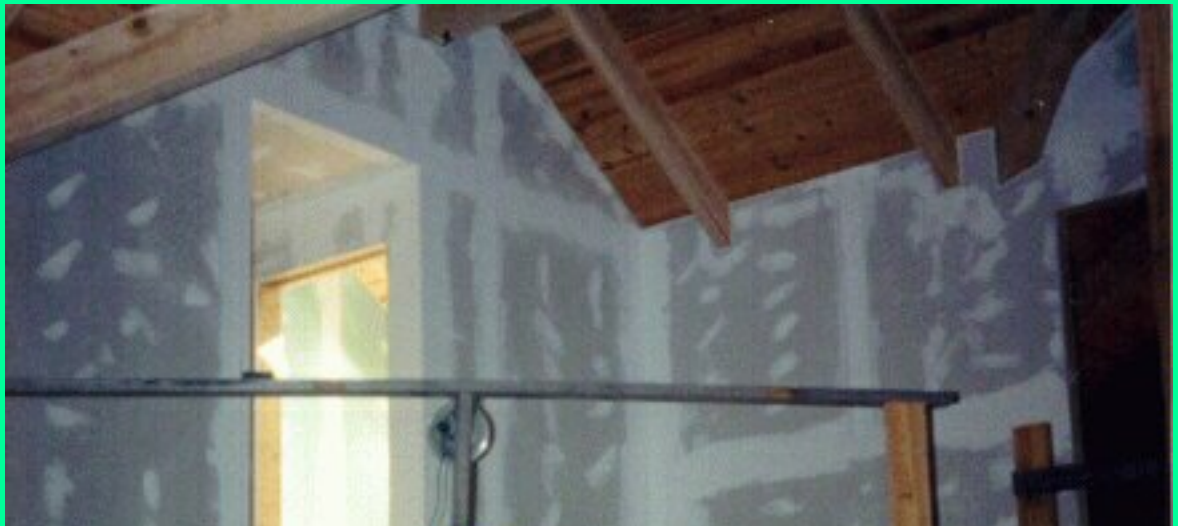


1st floor sheet rock

As Rosemary cleans up, you can see the sheet rock on the first floor. Looking at bathroom and master bedroom entrance.

2nd floor sheet-rock

Looking above the last picture at the 2nd floor landing/balcony.





2nd floor bathroom
Rosemary is painting the
2nd floor green-board.



2nd floor closet

Second floor closet
looking from the back
bedroom toward the
living room. Note how
the floor doesn't look so
great.

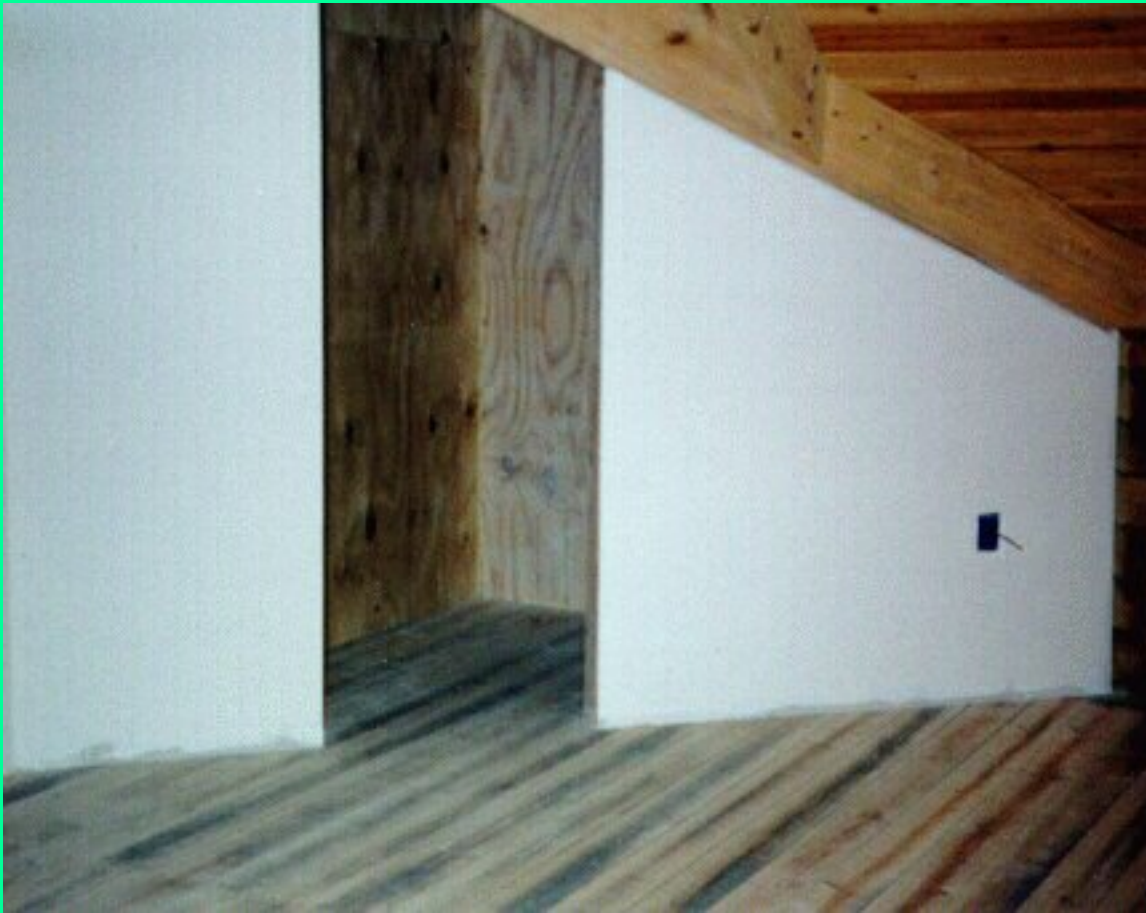




2nd floor bedroom closet

A finished look at the 2nd floor bedroom closet.

Notice the angle of the doorway (cut-off somewhat).



Landing

A look at the finished walls on the 2nd floor landing.





Finished balcony rails

Looking from the top of the stairs back toward the front of the house. This is as finished as things will get here.

Finished stairs

A look at the finished stairs, except for the actual steps of the stair - which was done when the 1st floor was done.





[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Next section\]](#)

Log Cabin Construction

Final Inside construction

[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Go to Previous section\]](#) [\[other pictures, uncataloged\]](#) [\[Questions/Comments\]](#)

This section contains pictures of the inside of the house, very close to their final completed stage. The 2nd floor, by this time, was finished awaiting furniture to be moved in. **Be sure to visit the main page for more pictures & information.**



Living room

A picture of the living room showing the fireplace, fan and all three walls.

Living room

Looking from the bottom of the stairs showing more detail of the fireplace. The wood shown on the floor is part of the flooring that eventually became the 1st floor.





Kitchen

This shows the kitchen with the cabinets in place, tile on the wall. (Tile on the side walls and the installed microwave cannot be seen in this picture). The refrigerator will be installed after the floor is installed and is only sitting there temporarily in this picture.



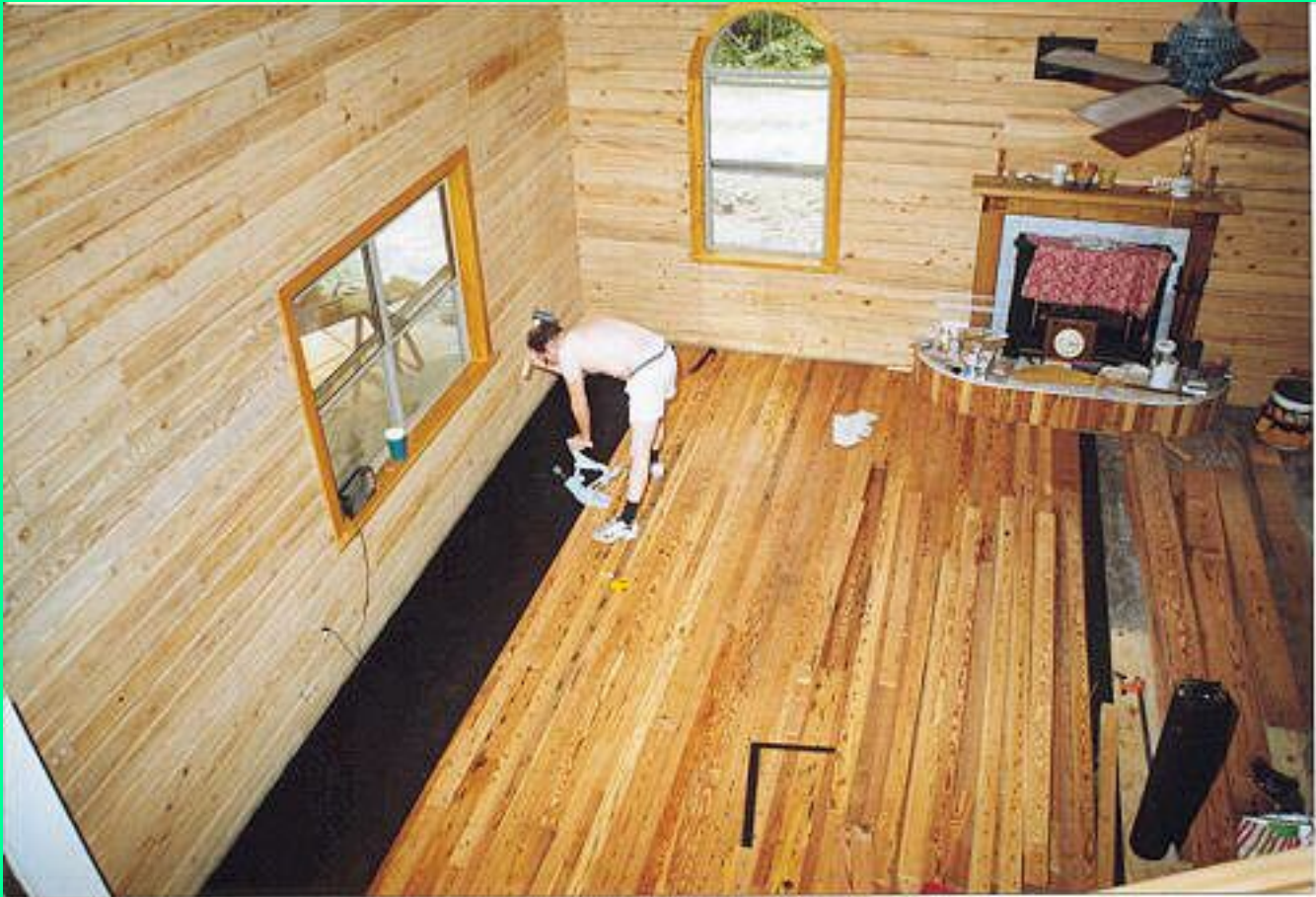
Kitchen flooring.

This shows the flooring going into the kitchen. You can see the spot on the left where the refrigerator will return to.



Master bedroom

Showing the view toward the downstairs bathroom. Cedar lined closets are visible to the left. Note the tar paper on the floor. This was used to form a vapor barrier between the sub-floor and wood flooring for the 1st floor.



Floor installation
Each piece of flooring had to be installed by hand.



Floor installation

By the stairway and doors the wood had to be custom cut.



Floor installation

An overview of the nearly completed flooring before the polyurethane covering was applied.

Log Cabin construction

Other photos

[\[Return to main page\]](#) [\[Questions/Comments\]](#)

Here are some pictures that didn't really fit into any of the other categories:



Front view.
Picture of the front of the house in mid-1998. This is close to the end of construction.



Front door



French doors

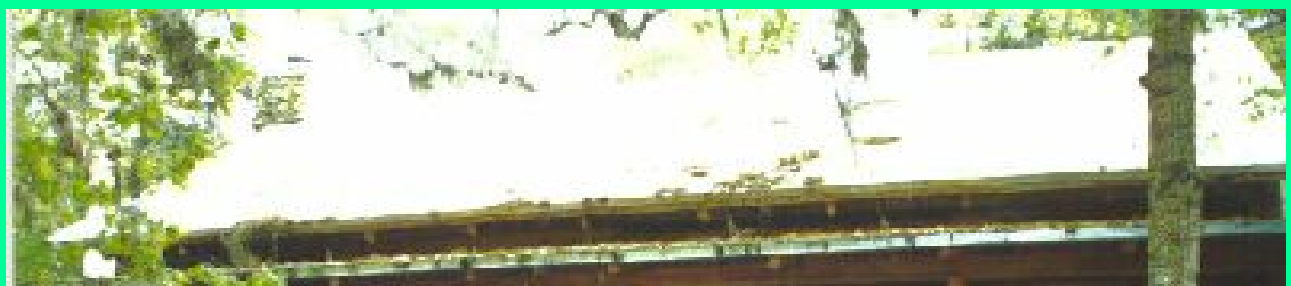
This is where the kitchen/
dining area opens unto the back
porch.



Local wildlife

Not a clear picture but there is an owl sitting in the tree. This
was taken in mid-afternoon just off the front of the house.

**Front View of
House**
A closeup view



of the front of the house, taken February, 1998. The tree on the right side of the house was removed soon after this picture.



Kitchen interior
Kitchen interior in progress

View from driveway A view showing the house and the garage and their relative placement on the property. Taken around February 1998. Note all the water in the driveway - that winter was a record breaking wet winter.





Back side of house

1st log.
The first log is put in place by a
worker from BK Cypress.





Upstairs bathroom.
The 2nd floor bathroom practically finished.

Guest room.
2nd Floor guest room. Above
the master bedroom.





Other room.
2nd Floor sewing/
computer room.
Above the kitchen and
pantry.

Bathroom.
The finished 1st floor
bathroom.





[\[Return to main page\]](#)