Log Housing In The Bush

Part I

As preliminary to this writing, which is being assembled in pieces (as was the log house construction, which it sets out to describe), there might be short lapses in what seems a mental malfunction, recognized by what may seem obvious repetitions, and digressions; let an apology be offered, for the lapses, and/or the repetitions; the digressions accompany the author wherever he finds himself. Some speculative attributions may be noted i.e. e.g. Alzheimer's. Without really knowing, only suspecting that age makes a difference, let it be said, we all have something to say. Enough may be recalled to make a passable tome of this endeavor. The words and the images will sometimes get a little out of phase, but most images are shown with some explanation in the margin, which somehow relates to the text.

The author is sitting in the log house, long ago completed. He is searching for a word which he wants to use to describe the whole purpose to being where he is. He looks out upon the water of Georgia Straits, often disturbed by the weather patterns common to the area. Seldom is the water 'flat' calm. Whether disturbed or undisturbed, the word that best describes the state of soul produced by the contemplation of the water is: *quiescence*. That choice may seem antithetic to the raging southeasters when they come, but we are discussing one of the most common elements upon the planet: water. The water he looks upon is contiguous with all oceanic bodies. He cannot swim in the cold briny element without drowning. Yet he has travelled upon it in his ark (Atavist) in many weathers, enjoying the getting away, the freedom of getting away; there is no where to go but here, but, in getting away, he still imagines the fatefully inevitable. 'Quiescence' may not circumscribe the whole intent, but regardless of the description, it is the reality of the alluded ambience that fulfills.

This is being drafted during a time when the fourth estate is rampant with mad dogs, and the political system is being corrupted by huge sums to influence the election process, the author, angered by both, and greatly saddened by the public's apathy, or seeming acquiescence, *comme ci, comme ça, Que Sera, Que Sera;* and subsequent apparent impotence. He will therefore be occasionally infusing his text with angry outbursts that may offend the reader, who in turn may feel put upon, when, all he wants to do, like the author, is to figure a way to build a log house in the bush.

As much as the author would like things to occur in isolation, as much as he himself would like to be immune to those things that destroy a setting that should be tranquil, he is not immune, and the

setting it is anything but tranquil. This statement may seem to contradict the notion of *quiescence* mentioned in this introduction.

As citizens, whether we participate on a day to day basis, as a matter of principle, in the hope, by such participation, one may have some positive effect on the civilizational aegis, or whether we want to live in isolation because we cannot tolerate the endless bickering and character assassination (routing around in people's underwear) filling the airways, we are nonetheless exposed, and our sanity is jeopardized. While being so affected, those responsible are distant, living in towers, surrounded by police, snarling dogs, and razor wire.

The author wants these controllers and agitators to be gone; to at least be held accountable, and silenced. However well-intended or not well-intended, serving a purpose or no purpose, we become victims of them and the demagogues they pretend to reveal. Often the facts are (truth is) obscured by the urge to sensationalize.

The First Amendment To The Constitution Of The United States Of America is suffering some dire abuse it may not be able to survive. The snarling dogs have been released upon us, without restraint or conscience, or any sense of accountability. There can be little doubt there is something rotten in Denmark, but it is mostly amplified by the muckrakers.

The author cannot tender apologies over something which he has no control. Perhaps it has always been this way, and because of it, a certain number of people want to escape the inevitable consequences, the worst of which is to live in a constant state of turmoil. It is the author's contention, without any absolute proof to offer, life was not intended to be this way, to be forced to endure this fateful inevitability (as Sigmund opines, *gratuitously).*

The Log House adventure began, mostly through fortuitous circumstances. It actually became the 'fortuitous' (absence of purpose in the succession of events) offspring of boating adventures. No, it was not the same as a nuclear device exploding (speaking of the absence of purpose), spraying the earth with radioactive debris. But boating had its consequences.

One of things that happens when you are free as a bird on the water, navigating the medium that covers three quarters of the globe, you see all manner of perches located by the sea, not bird nests, but human nests. It seems one cannot just admire, but soon he doth desire.

Why a perch by the water? The author doesn't know the real reason, except it may have nothing to do with reason. It is said we evolved from some sea substance, primal ooze, or perhaps watery organism. It is said some infants are born with incipient gills located in the neck area of the human body.

It was the Greeks, who, after prolonged battle with Darius, in the desert, upon seeing the Mediterranean, uttered those famously desperate words: “Thalatta!, Thalatta!, Thalatta!”

Arriving at our imaginary destination had taken a circuitous path. Wherever we travelled, we found the land had been claimed; some kind of flag, and armed personnel, announced its possession by another. So it was not just a matter of being English, Dutch, Spanish or Portuguese, landing with blunderbusses and armor, and planting a flag, claiming it for his queen or king; it became a matter between owners and sellers; and title companies, and banks, and national interests.

The author does not wish to proceed too rapidly through this tale.

Before considering the prospect of a perch, other things happened. An island we had passed by, several times, on our way to some other ‘Shangri-La, inadvertently, became our destination. We anchored in a small group of islands in the middle of Georgia Straits BC Canada. While there, we were joined by another craft from Seattle, Hoko, by name, its occupants, Frank and Else Istas, a past middle age couple, who had been plying these very waters for several years. Besides carrying on board a 120 year old culture of sourdough, they cultured in their heads much knowledge of these self-same environs. Since we were so close, anchored behind Paul Island, in a bay as part of Jedidiah Island (sounds Biblical, No!?), they advised us to stop at Scotty Bay, a bay associated with Lasqueti Island (sounds Spanish No!?).

Having followed their advice, after anchoring, we had decided to disembark for a walk upon that island, which, we soon learned, had a reputation, not only as a perching place, but as a place to engage in illicit, mind altering, activity; earning a title, later, in its presumptuous remaking of history, of ‘Accidental Eden’.

The author proceeds too fast, omitting vital details.

We were not allowed to walk upon the island, that is, we were insistently persuaded to accept a ride by one of the natives, chugging along in a somewhat battered Datsun Pickup, a rather ubiquitous type of carriage, or conveyance, to be found on the island. In accepting the ride we were invited to an afternoon ‘tea’, by the lady of the house, to see their newly finished perch located above Scotty, the bay that also served as home for their boat, and eventually home for ‘Atavist’. They are now long gone, their house torn down; something to assail one’s consciousness, No!?

One thing led to another; isn’t that the way of it, though?

We met several nearby residents who casually dropped by for a hello, a drink, or a toke. In addition, during our stay in Scotty, we were chauffeured about in the coughing, sputtering, Datsun, to meet other notables on the island.

Then we continued on our way to our primary destination, Desolation Sound (during the summer time, the so-named, is anything but desolate; it is rather replete; nearly reeking of a redundant paleface).

However, the next year, we included Lasqueti Island in our itinerary as a 'must', for further entertainment and whatever unknown unknowns. 'Next year' is a significant term, because we, Charline and the author, were employed at the University of Oregon, Institute Of Molecular Biology, with approximately one month's vacation per annum. Previous to these two occasions we had taken the children with us on our annual monthly sojourn on the water, but they were teenagers who decided they wanted to do their own thing, under the watchful eye of the author's mother.

Whatever the children were doing had no bearing upon our sojourn. Lasqueti Island had subsequently become an important inclusion in any further watery wanderings.

However, our next adventure, as it turned out, became our most expanded experience in this northwest ambience, finding us on a leave of absence for six months, headed for Southeast Alaska, only somewhat narrated in Knotted Twine (pleasepassthetruth.org).

This is not related to Lasqueti Island in particular, but we did stop there on our way to and from.

More significantly, the author had decided not to return to the University, having tasted for the first time in his life, the fruits of freedom from toil. An illusion, of course, as you will learn.

Subsequent to this, he was free to help deliver, in a month-long journey, a 36' Grand Banks from Seattle to San Diego. Upon his next visit to Lasqueti Island, while attending their first fall fair, in their newly completed Community Center, referred as the 'Hall', he was reintroduced to a notable he had met on his first excursions in the Sputtering Datsun. It was not so much a reintroduction as it was Charline overhearing a conversation between the said notable and other notables, wherein was asked and discussed whether or not the first notable had found a caretaker for their property while they ventured south for a couple of months, during the fall/winter, after the garden was cleaned up. The notable having not indicating an affirmative, Charline volunteered the author's availability for such a task, whereupon both were invited to meet with the head of the household, located down the road (the 'end of the road' as characterized by the Mrs., Schoolteacher, turned Farmer [see page 159].).

The meeting concluded with nothing decided.

None the wiser, as the time approached for the notables departure south, the author wanting to resolve this somewhat unfinished business, telephoned the notables, who responded with, "When are you coming up?" In some ways, as time went on, this was considered not too big a surprise; that is, the delayed response. The head of the household,

although bearded himself (a greybeard [almost white]), the author being yet another beard, but of a younger configuration, looked too much like all the 'planners, pushers, philanderers and potheads' that seemed the dominant type, if not, the noisiest, and most troublesome, on the island, and which the household head had begun to distrust. This was not an idle paranoia generated by this household head. He was a true believer in democratic institutions, and a democratic society, because it enabled him to be who he was and what he was. It also afforded his neighbor, whomever he might be, the same privilege, or honor, however you choose to construe it. He had come to the island from the US of A during the Vietnam War, not a as draft dodger, but as a parent of two young sons. Again, this might be construed as another consequence of 'boating', for the household head had arrived on these shores in his Cal 20. It may also be construed a consequence of war mongering, and a direct result of the Gulf Of Tonkin resolution.

In the end, the price for the 160 acres, marginally farmed, was affordable, and the deal was sealed, or his family's fate was sealed. He and his wife, and their children became landed immigrants, and eventually became Canadian citizens. For them, it was not an 'Accidental Eden', but a place of hard labor, living on a 'shoestring', with few amenities (no electricity, and no 'running water'; to which they were accustomed in their previous quarters in the big city of Seattle.) The house came with a well, full of a dank liquid. They improved their water adventure by pumping water from a swamp into huge mooring buoy mounted upon a knoll, draining by gravity through poly pipe buried underground to furnish water to the house; not potable by any standard. With time, they siphoned water from a tiny creek, running it through a ¾ inch poly tube along the ground a ½ mile away; and they used propane mantle, as well as kerosene lamps, for light. They 'farmed', they had animals (chickens, turkeys, and cattle). When they departed for two months on a camping sojourn on their way to Merida, Mexico, it was for sun and relaxation, as well as some special food.

Anyway, for the author, it had begun. Six years of caretaking followed in like manner; without the necessity of renegotiating anything except, "Are you available?" The nominal length of stay was for two months, from mid-October to mid-December. This caretaking adventure was also an opportune time to get busy with the pen, something long neglected, and overdue, in his way of thinking. Herein was spawned Notes, Archaeopteryx, and other attempts at literary endeavors.

It could be noted that water was still a problem when the water line froze. The caretaker learned to fill plastic garbage cans (used in winemaking) in order to have a supply of water, to cover all contingencies.

While the property was not located on the water, per se, all the local notables were located on the water; one, an older couple, who wanted to travel to his homeland, Greece, for a month, during the time the author was serving as a caretaker. They had asked if he could look in upon their property, occasionally, during their absence.

Having agreed to do so, one day, while so occupied, during a very windy, stormy day, all decked out in yellows, the author ventured along the shore on a neighboring unoccupied waterfront property, coming

upon a grassy bluff where the wind raged without obstruction against all that dared wander there, which nearly blew the caretaker away, but was so unforgettably exhilarating, the author was smitten from that day forward. Oh Yes, he had been smitten on the Oregon coast during storms; not so much as smitten as 'holy cow, wow!', and truly 'awed' at the power of 'mother nature'. This island setting was different, because it was a very private affair that only he felt at that time and that place; it became an epiphany.

One need not elaborate upon the anomalies and vicissitudes of fate, only to mention they are real, and, as Sigmund has intimated, inevitably, do fatefully descend upon us from time to time. During a visit in the autumn of 1986, the author and his wife were invited to the 65th birthday party of one of the shoreside notables, where another invitee, a former land partner, the owner of the unforgettable bluffy place, was present. Precedent to this, we had heard from the first notable (for whom the author had done the caretaking), that the bluffy property had been advertised for sale in a Vancouver newspaper.

Apprised of this turn of fate, and having decided between themselves (the author and his spouse) that acquiring a piece of what is known as the 'rock', seemed their destiny, and that such destiny would only be fulfilled by a waterfront parcel, they began the process of offers, and counteroffers with the partner. Over the next two months, by mail, and by phone, an agreement was reached, whereupon the author and his spouse acquired title to the said bluffy property situated on a ten acre parcel. This all occurred 'fortuitously' (once again), perhaps 'opportunely', during a time when the US dollar was worth 1.33 CDN. In addition, the real estate market was virtually dead. Still, many thought they paid too much. To them, it wasn't a matter of too much or too little, it was a matter of 'this is it', and, can they afford it?

It could be mentioned that they had previously made offers on other waterfront properties, located on Scotty Bay, which fortunately, as it fatefully turned out, were not accepted.

In February 1987, the deal was closed, and they were the happy owners (holders of a Certificate Of Title) of a piece of the rock; 'raw' land, as it was properly described. They were broke; that is, without any funds to get a building process started; building of what, was undecided.

The first acquisition for the property was a temporary living quarters (9 years) in the form of a used 26 foot 1973 Mobile Scout trailer (22 feet x 8 feet of actual living space). It contained all the necessary accommodations with an added propane mantle lamp, and some 12 volt portable fluorescent camping lights. It had a four burner propane stove with a propane oven above, a propane refrigerator with a freezer compartment. It had a six gallon propane water heater, a 40 gallon water storage tank. It also had a propane furnace which they did not use; instead the author welded up Lucifeu, a small airtight wood burning stove. The trailer had beds, a couch, chairs, and a table, and cupboards, and lots of windows, with a impressive view. Again, it was a beginning without electricity, and running water.

Charline was still working at the University; they were using her salary to keep things going, but were forced to improvise in order to live within their means.

They had more or less decided where to build, behind a rise in the land; out of the path of the 'roaring southeasters'. There were 'Volkswagon' Mills located on the island. The going rate at the time for unfinished Lasqueti lumber (nominally Douglas Fir) was ~ $180.00/thousand board feet. The average modest house might require 20,000 board feet (the roof and the floors of the first part of the log house (1000 sq. ft.) required 8000 board feet (of kiln-dried and milled 2x6 t&g lumber, at $250.00/1000 board feet). Lasqueti lumber was not kiln-dried, and was not milled, and as it materializd, the Douglas fir was a very hard wood, easily split when being nailed.). At $180.00/1000, the

estimated cost for the raw lumber would be $3,600.00. All of it would require milling. A Barbo Model 100 12 inch planer cost $1000.00. It was undecided what kind of foundation would be needed for a frame construction building. Cement pylons might suffice. The thermal paned windows would cost $1100.00. The trailer had already cost $2700.00. The tractor cost $450.00. As must be evident, we were not paying top dollar for anything, but still, the costs added up. Hidden or unanticipated costs are a given, for tools (e.g. saws), steel roofing which cost $2000.00, vapor barrier, insulation, Tri-Ply, 3 rolls 400 sq.ft. of Galvanized mesh cost $500.00. The time period in question was the late 1980's. Most of the lumber and roofing for the eventual shop came from dismantling a neighbor's house no longer in use, located on another property a couple of miles down the road. Even the associated outhouse was moved for use on their property.

One of the local notables had built a log structure for a shop area, and was in the process of finishing a house, using logs as its base, to a height of 8 feet. He had trained with Allan Mackie of Prince George, using, primarily, a round notch for the corners.

He encouraged the author to use log construction; feeling it was possible for him (the author) to do the work.

In preparation, the builder loaned him his library of log house building books, several of his tools, and eventually, sold him his old 1948 Dodge wrecking truck ($400.00).

Don't believe everything you read.

At the outset the author wants to say he is a very lucky person to have had the opportunity to do this thing.

Charline, his spouse, has made it possible for him to enjoy a certain freedom from ordinary cares. He had been relieved of duty on the front lines.

He had not been in the work force since he was forty-seven. He had been a diligent worker until then, or nearly to the end; so saying, the last year was particularly difficult, since already, within his being, had been sown the seeds of departure. He had burned out, and was in danger of flame-out.

He was never a particularly good parent, but would have remained at his post longer if his offspring had shown a serious interest in furthering their educations. As a poor parent he had failed to impress upon them the world of man was a very competitive and mean place, and as uneducated ones they were very apt to find themselves on the bottom of the heap. The school system failed in this mission also.

Is it because the educated do not wish to have those without educations telling them what to do, especially by those without, who

have settled to the bottom? Its that hierarchy-superiority-non-assimilable-some-are-born-to-succeed-lead thing. It hearkens back to Aristotle and Pythagoras. Careening career lemmings, as much as sapiens.

True it is, with tenuous motivation, dedication, and other interests, one may rise from their assigned place, not particularly based upon their education. Take General Custer, Al Capone, or W.

All, all this is beside the point, except to say, the author was also modestly rewarded for his efforts without the benefit of much formal education. His father was not interested enough to care. He did have many opportunities to rise through education, but sought instead to stumble about, pursuing a variety of interests.

As he has already intimated, he does say he has been fortunate.

He acknowledges he is basically unfit for human society. Its not that he does not like people. He likes wood nymphs most of all, sweet smiling things that emerge from the forests of his imagination, with whom he spends many happy hours. He likes real life nymphs as well, but has somehow or other never managed to endear himself to them, ever since he is able to remember. There are other hominid entities with whom he has shared thoughts and feelings, but forever seems locked within himself. He cannot say for sure he is an Island alone; Charline persuades him he is not; her presence acts as the persuasion. She hangs around as though he is an important enough being. She has been very consistent in her persuasions.

Why do we do what we do? The author cannot tell you specifically why we do what we do.

Something grips ones life; an idea takes hold, enlisting ones energies; and before one realizes it, he has traveled down a road so far, he feels he cannot retrace his steps, even though he may be discouraged with the eventual prospects of the journey, even though the labor of arriving there seems unending, even though a failing body, and ill health beset him, and yes, even though those who surround him, prove less than good company. The author had recognized the fact he cannot turn back.

Others had been impressed with his dedication to 'press on', despite all the obstacles, whatever they might have been. The edge of discouragement has been dulled through that 'dedicated' effort, resulting in progress. Progress is gauged by an internal measure as well as external. One feels better about things as the project arrives at a new phase, the old having become wearisome, and more and more demanding. As one attempted to maintain a standard of construction he had enjoyed during the newness, and the intrigue of problem solving, with time, these had somehow grown less enjoyable, through repetitiousness and the tedium of the standard.

The question did arise: "Why do I do this?"

Returning each day had become a ritualized endeavor. Awaking each morning, age 60, with aches, and stumblings, dealing with the wet and cold, left alone to make a decision whether or not to continue, mattering only to him, really, whether or not he continued, although others were involved at a great distance. One neighbor would heighten his discouragement and frustration when, every time he appeared, he asked the same annoying question, "Is the roof up yet?" This was after the author had explained to him he had got himself into something from which he could not escape. One day he suggested to the neighbor to turn over the record. That kept him at bay for a while until he began asking again. Finally the author needed to challenge him to 'cease and desist' by involving his computing skills (spending nearly most of his waking hours programming and computing). The author had indicated to him, he probably had observed enough of the author's working habits, and working skills; he was well enough apprised of the difficulties in attempting to build in the 'bush' (having done so himself); and he knew enough about mathematical constants and variables; statistical, unrelated interventions, and coincidences; Murphy's Law, and other such Laws, and unique happenings, peculiar to the island alone, as to possess enough information to write a program in order to be able to predict when the roof would be up; then he could tell the author. This suggestion put him at bay an even longer time. For a time he would apologize for not having an answer for the author, then he would say he was working on it; eventually he returned to the old question? To the author, it signaled his neighbor's defeat. He had fallen before the challenge; he had given into his torment, the origins of which the author knew not.

He supposed his neighbor was completely perplexed by the author's intuitive approach to what he was doing. Although he knew the author had constructed a model, it wasn't until he needed to solve the roof lines which he could not visualize, or draw three dimensionally, that he had even begun to plan in earnest. Before that, the author had proceeded as might some pioneer, by clearing a site on the 'rock', by trying out the materials and the tools, by proving to himself he could somehow handle the medium (perhaps something the pioneer did not have the luxury to do, his imperatives and options operating on a different plane than the author's). The neighbor, being physically handicapped, had to calculate everything before he would proceed, down to the last detail, whereas the author's rough calculations were reserved for how many logs (trees) would be required; not much time spent on calculating loads, stresses, shrinkage; mathematical variables were not even a consideration outside of a general number that would not become important until way down the line (perhaps further down the line than the roof): diametrical shrinkage (something of which to be aware more than to calculate since

the numbers given by the experts didn't prove accurate [the trees {logs} were different from place to place, and behaved differently]); and so on.

The author should explain that this document cannot go on and on and on ad infinitum, even though nice pictures and wordy flourishes may come at random. Since this document is intended for the Internet (that great self-publishing organ) certain requirements limit the file size. That's not a file you use to sharpen your saw, but a file, as a carry over from filing cabinets, full of important papers and documents. A filing cabinet is full of these so named files. The Internet file size is an extrapolation of file size that would go into a file folder in a filing cabinet. While the Internet may be perceived as one huge filing cabinet, space seems not to be infinite.

It goes to say this document will exceed a certain size limitation, requiring the start of a new file. In using jpg files (file within a file) which take up a lot of space (sufficient pixels to make a presentable image), self-publishing his writings on the Internet, and in self-publishing his sculptural efforts, he has learned not to exceed the file size requirements. This has resulted in dividing some of those efforts into several parts.

So we shall proceed until we come up against the walls which demand compliance with aforementioned limitations.

Our first picture show begins with photos of the model, annotated; and a diagram of the floor plan (with eventual addition, shown as well).

Then we will proceed as we might, with relevant, and irrelevant excursions with the word, hopefully shedding light upon the chosen path.

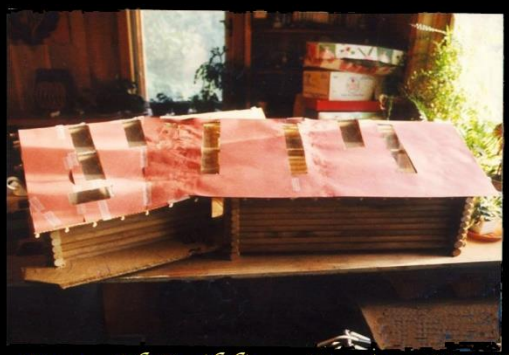
The author will use this space to explain the other empty spaces that will occur. Some of the empty spaces will be filled with something pretty to look at, however irrelevant, like many other things that are irrelevant, to Log Housing In The Bush. So don't be taken aback by something that seems irrelevant, particularly if it is photo of a pretty sunset. The pretty sunsets were part of something. They could be viewed as offsets to the things that are really irrelevant to Log Housing In The Bush. It must be understood that the author is not only building a Log House In The Bush, but he is pondering the noise of humanity that reaches him, no matter where he is, or what he is doing.

Time Line: 1987: Trailer. 1988: Tractor, Dismantle Neighbor's Old House. Clear Building Site, Septic Tank. 1989: Build Most Of Shop, Dig Water Hole On Crown Land. Water To Trailer, Falling In November . 1990: Continue Falling In January: Log Peeling, Log Placement, Build To Floor Joists, Cover For Winter. 1991: Build Rear And Side Walls, Cover For Winter, Transport 8000 bd. ft. 2x 6 t&g Via Truck And Barge. Store In Shop. 1992: Very Little Accomplished With Heart And Back Surgeries. 1993: Front Walls, Purlins, Ridge Poles. Rafters, Covered For Winter. 1994: Roofing, Windows. 1995: Flooring, Some Interior Stuff. Boating. 1996: Mice Invaded Trailer. Moved Into House. Water Shed, Plumbing, Cabinet Work. 1997: Wood Shed, Solar Panels 1998: Table, Drilled Well 1999: New Year's, Island Living. 2000: Greenhouse, Garden Plot; Fruit

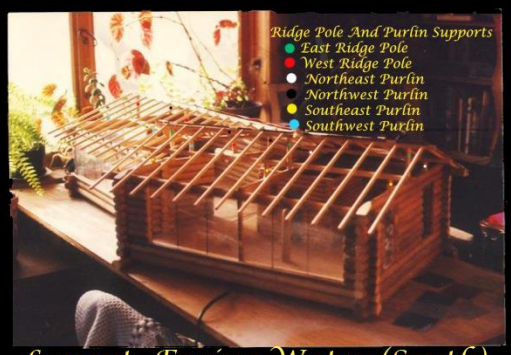
Trees. 2001: Garden, Garden Shed 2003: Addition To House.
The model follows:

Front Door Facing Water (West)

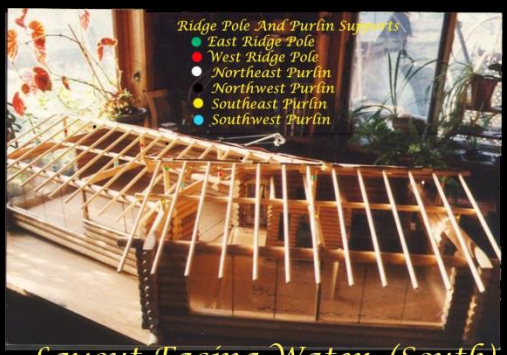
Rear Door Covered Porch (North)



Rear Of Building Facing North

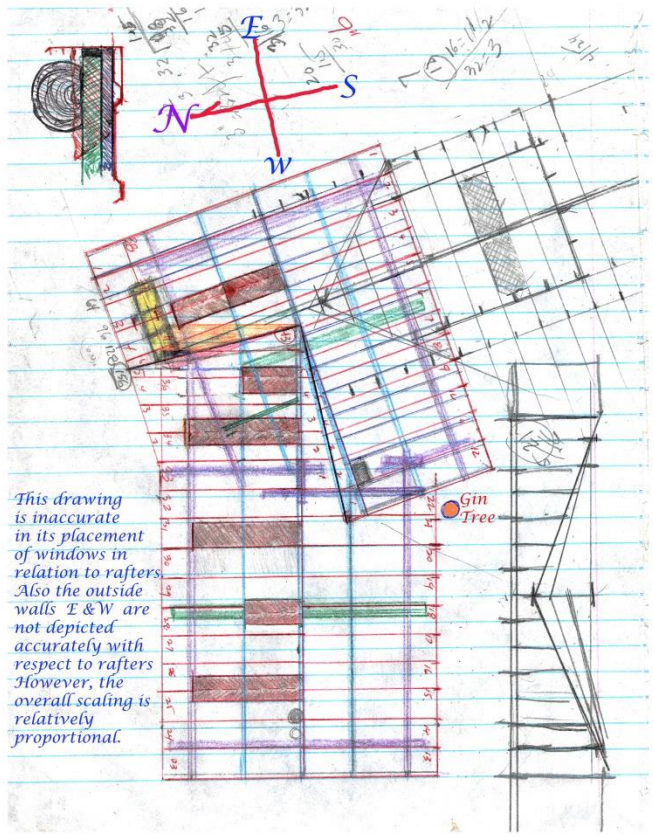


Layout Facing Water (South)



Layout Facing Water (South)

Study Of Interior Looking North



To continue.

There were others who happened by, who marveled, to whom the author would make self-effacing remarks, knowing full-well how many 'sons-of-bitches' and "Jesus H. Fucking Christs' had gone into the project, perhaps more than love of labor, or labor of love. What was done was behind him; that was the expected part, for which he could not take credit, while the other remained to do. That's the problem with assembling something large out-of-doors where it can be seen. He remembers reading in some 'art' book, or perhaps biography of an

'artist', of an admonition, not to talk about what it is you are going to paint, write, sculpt, for fear all the inspiration will slip away in the gab. So he didn't talk much about what he had done, or what he was going to do; he just did it, and let it speak for itself - good or bad! People said he was being modest. Little do they know of the internal struggle, how tired he felt, how foolish (and, as this tale is finally told, foolishness will perhaps become a large part). Having a small but comfortable trailer with most of the conveniences, some that the pioneer would envy, one neighbor questioned the wisdom of building something large that one would only have to clean and maintain, that is, after seeing the accommodations of the trailer, which seemed so easy to clean and maintain. Each to his own.

Surely the trailer was an accommodation. The main event is the water, the surroundings. The sound of the waves, the seals, and the birds, the feral sheep, and the deer; the appearance of the arbutus, the craggy wind-stressed Douglas Firs; the unimaginable space before one beyond the shore, and the pristine sky above; the storms; all, all, which disappear as one chainsaws at the world before him. Why not keep it simple? Aye!, why not?

Why do we do what we do? A few years ago we 'sailed off into the sunset'. There were those who thought such an 'adventure' would become the stuff of a written volume. The author did write about the sojourn in his own peculiar syntax (Knotted Twine), the stuff of which elicited a lack of interest as a publishable entity, by those who publish. The revenge of the author was to 'self-publish' on the internet. Now, there are those who are suggesting a log house book because we have built a log house in the bush. Again the author is proceeding in his own peculiar manner, without any hope of shedding any light upon what it is we do, or having whatever light we shed, earn a right to be passed on.

There is something about which we do, and have done, that smacks of the symbolic, that is, what we do and have done, many others would also like to do, mostly for the same reasons we do them.

Boats represent a mobility and a freedom we cannot experience even in our automobiles. Building a log house in the bush represents other dimensions to life that are not found in the overcivilized world of readymade amenities.

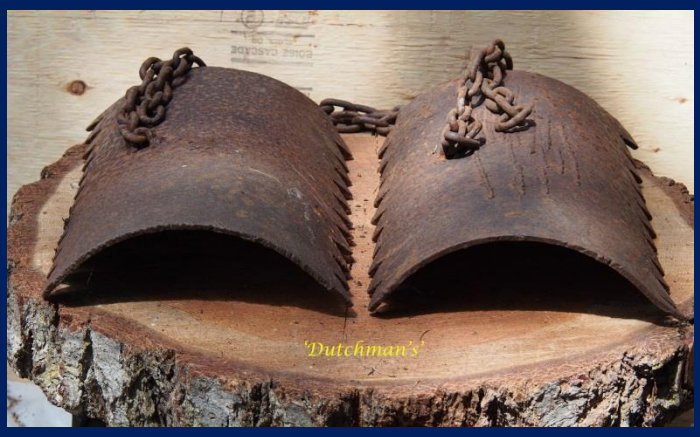
Deciding to build with logs involves dismembering trees that have lived longer than oneself, and would have the hope of living lives that eclipsed ones own by many years. Also one leaves behind a messy trail no matter how careful his extraction of the tree-logs. Therefore one does not enter lightly into this dismembering and befouling. And, each tree becomes an important resource; it gets marked with iridescent tape, becoming a very special entity, not to be wasted.

Accompanying the loaned log tools came some how-to books which proved their worth in various ways. The person from whom we purchased the property had been a faller and a logger. The property was encumbered with a public roadway that required relocation before we would accept the sale. The owner thus aided us in relocating the roadway which required the felling of a number of trees, most of the larger ones having been felled by him. It provided the author with an opportunity to observe the process and the mechanics, along with certain forest practices. He'll not burden this missive with the how-to of felling trees. However he will mention a few anecdotes that pertain to the differences (sometimes gulf) encountered between theory and practice.

In some cases there will be things he has learned through a lifetime of trial and error; these he would hope to relate as he becomes aware of them. One thing he would hope to communicate however, is an attitude, an attitude toward doing something beyond that which one feels are his (or her) capabilities.

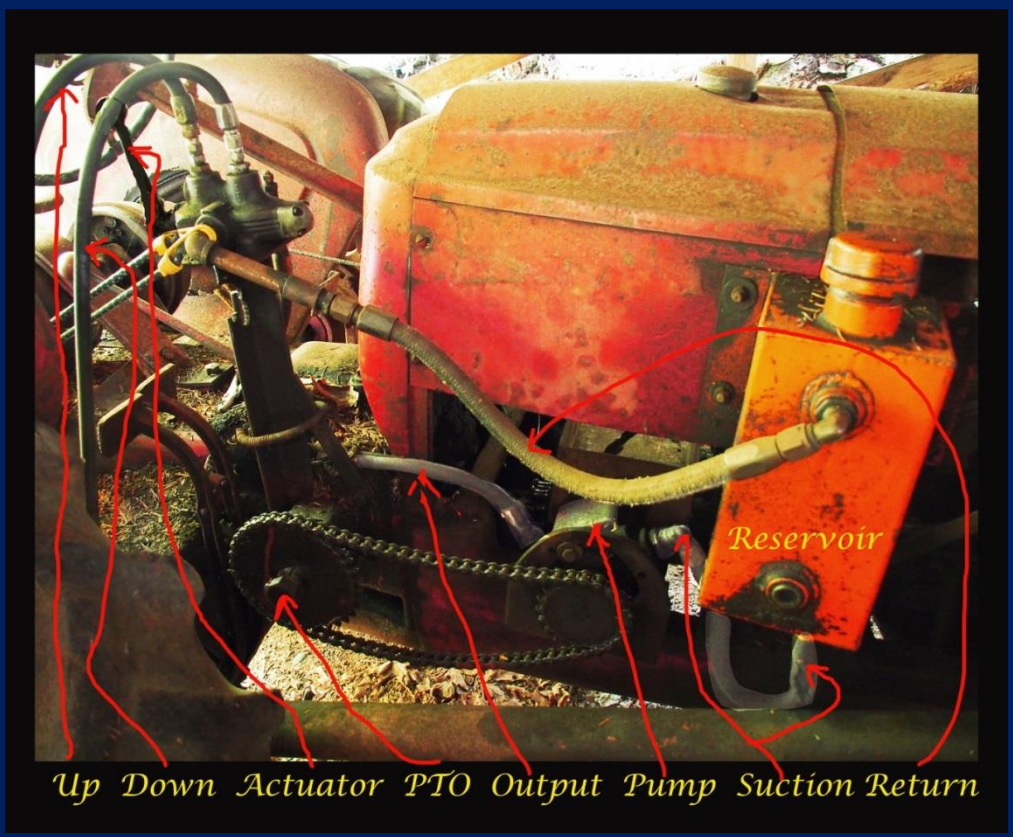
Paul Bunyan symbolizes something of which we believe we are incapable. But Paul Bunyan was of the species Homo Sapiens of which we are members. All that Mr. Bunyan may have accomplished we may not be able to do, since we do not have his blue ox, but much of what he did, we may be able to do, because we possess the ingenuity of his species.

As previously mentioned, from the log house builder on the island, he acquired his old 1948 Dodge wrecking truck, a wreck in its own right, without brakes, excepting its emergency brake. The vehicle was equipped a six-volt system that would not operate a starter, requiring twelve volts instead. The important feature, the engine, was in good condition and would run at a constant speed without stalling while its PTO winch was in operation. The truck was equipped with good tires and a pair of what were referred to as 'dutchmans'. One supposes every clever inexpensive device receives this common appellative. These 'dutchmans' were curved semi-circular pieces of steel plate, with teeth sawed into their edges. They were approx. 20" inches long x 12 inches wide. To them were attached (welded) pieces of chain. These devices were placed behind the rear wheels, with the length of chain inserted into notches in the rear bumper acting as a tether. When the winch began to pull an object from the rear of the truck, the rear wheels would want to



ride up over these obstructions, but could not, since they were tethered. In effect, if the truck was to move, instead of the object being pulled, it would have to overcome both its weight, the restricted rolling motion of the rear wheels, and the toothed edges of the 'dutchmans', as they dug into the earth. If the object being pulled (usually a length of log perhaps 40 feet in length, sometimes the whole tree, some 14 to 18 inches in diameter) became lodged behind a root or a rock it would cause the whole apparatus to labor until it stalled, if the author wasn't alert to the possibility (He tended to listen very carefully to the laboring sound of the engine, in order to prevent a stalling, for the starter proved recalcitrant at best, at all times, very often not engaging the flywheel until several tries had passed, very much taxing the battery which had no charging circuit, being 12 volt in a 6 volt system).

A poor welding job securing the winch support broke loose once when the truck motor was performing at a higher rpm than usual, the log it was pulling suddenly struck a root. The truck raised its front end off the ground causing some severe wrenching and twisting of the frame as the whole vehicle was attempting to stand upon its rear wheels, like a rearing horse. When this happened, the vehicle's front end was a foot or so off the ground; with a resounding breaking, cracking, and crunching sound, the world was reduced to sudden and absolute silence. Ox #1.



This called for the intervention of the 1942 Massey-Harris 'row crop' tractor. Some people are lucky. The author had a tractor, a most valuable piece of equipment; actually the yeoman of the whole works, the whole log works. The tractor was purchased at a local secondhand store (in Eugene, Oregon from Howard Templer)) for $400.00 in one of

those deals where it was for sale for $500.00, but it was $400.00, if the author bought it, then and there. With what he 'saved', he also purchased a spare engine, and a spare carburetor from the same place of business, with still fifty dollars of the $500.00 not spent. It also came with three extra wheels, one with a good, though smaller diameter tire. This was no ordinary tractor. While it did not have a three point hitch, it did come equipped with a 'rube', or jerry rigged, bucket, on the front end, and a five hundred pound elevator weight suspended from its rear axle. The bucket was raised and lowered through a series of pulleys and a cable attached to a winch that was operated by a modified differential/axle/with wheels, less rims, and an independent brake (one for raising, and one for holding the raised bucket) on each wheel. The whole had been shortened and was located beneath the seat, the center of the driven end of the differential located above and connected by chain to the rear PTO located beneath it. The side PTO was connected by chain to a hydraulic pump which was connected through series of worn hydraulic hoses and copper tubings to rather feeble pistons that actuated the tilt of the bucket. Anyway, the yeoman dislodged the encumbered log end, releasing the truck and the tension on the rather scrambled works, which the author managed to clear with crow bars etc. and keep in place with a pair of vise grips, blocking the free motion of the broken support.

On another occasion the truck returned the favor to the tractor when, one day, the author was relocating some piled rocks on a hillside, backing the tractor in a downhill direction, being careful not to allow the tractor athwartships to the hill's inclination, having been apprised of the inherent instability of the tricycle-like construction of the row crop tractor. As he was so engaged, he was indeed involved in some sideways maneuvering in order to deposit the rocks along what was becoming a roadside. In so doing, with an overburdened bucket, the one and only tractor brake on the right rear wheel failed to stop the tractor at the calculated angle where its precarious metacenter was rapidly being approached in a moving arc. Instantly realizing that the worst was about to happen, he leaped off the tractor just before it tipped over on its down hill side (recall what the author speculated with regard to trial and error, and theory and practice).

One of the disappointing things in this life; with all the photos we take, we seem to pass up the big events. This was true in our boating experiences; the sturm and drang was seldom photographed. In the log house adventure, the first thing was not to run for the camera. The author ought to apologize for such omissions. Words, such as they are, will have to suffice.

The truck, with its winch cable tied to one of tractor's huge rear wheels (58" dia.), became the easy solution to righting the tractor. A lesson learned and a favor returned. Incidentally this was not the first

occasion when the author had humored himself with the thought he would not want to be found unconscious, or dead, wearing dirty underwear. The two oxen.

Having undergone one surgery (lumbar laminectomy) for a ruptured disc, brought about by some incautious handling of the boom located at the rear the wrecking truck, Charline had become aware of the author's vulnerability, and his fallibility, simultaneously. Thereafter, whenever she was present, hearing a loud noise in the vicinity of where he was working would bring from her what was becoming a familiar (and annoying) query. "Are you all right?" He had tried to reassure her that he had learned his lesson, and that he was being careful. He informed her also that log house building was a noisy business, especially when he would lower a 30 to 40 foot log in place after it had been shaped to fit; sometimes creating a resounding thock, or thump, depending how well it landed upon its destined place. Having finally convinced her of the appropriateness of the sounds, she could sometimes work, peeling logs nearby, with her back to his workings, without becoming particularly alarmed at otherwise disturbing sounds. One day she was so preoccupied as he was chain sawing away on one of the corners nearby, when, forgetting where he was, stepping backwards, he suddenly realized there was no footing behind, or underneath, and, like he did with the tractor, simultaneously, with the one foot still making contact with the log, he shoved off, leaping toward solid ground some seven feet below, at the same time pitching the running chainsaw away from himself in another direction. The saw continued to operate, bouncing and landing beneath the tractor, fortunately missing, but barely, a huge calcium chloride filled rear wheel. Charline only became aware of the mishap, because of the unusual pitch of the sputtering saw, as it echoed hollowly from beneath the tractor. Finally she earned the right to ask legitimately, "Are you all right?" The third ox.

The author is making light of these events; there were others, some of which could have been prevented by proceeding with more caution and awareness. Eventually a small slip on a loose board resulted in another lumbar laminectomy. Needless to say, each one of these 'accidents' [accidents in Eden], if you will, resulted in lost log house building time.

The author has leapt ahead in the script, now feeling the need to reconnoiter.

The decision to build with logs was a tentative future possibility. After the clearing was more or less prepared, it was noted that the ground was mostly a kind of a conglomerate, that is, mother earth was mostly comprised of a compacted rocky, gravel/earth congealed matrix, a hard substance (check out the images involved in preparing a place for the septic tank) which somehow influenced a decision, regarding a foundation to any building.

Whether through expedience, or the lack of foresight, it was decided that the matrix was a solid enough surface to warrant the use of rocks as the support for any building. It was also decided that logs placed upon rocks would serve as a foundation for further log construction, or, if the decision was made, for the construction of a framed building.

There were a few sizable trees, 'blow-downs', available for the purpose stated; their state of decay not sufficiently advanced to warrant their rejection for use for the purpose stated.

Once again, the author, getting slightly ahead of himself, there was the matter of moving the soon-to-be logs. The logs were pieces of dismembered Douglas fir, nominally 14-18" in diameter, the longest approximately 40', prospective ridge poles even longer. The weight of such an object @ ~35 lbs. to 50 lbs./foot, would approach 1400 to 2000lbs. It would require a blue ox or some equivalent piece of machinery to accomplish such movement. An oxen was also required to move some of the sizeable rocks to be used as building supports.

With deliberations, consciously or unconsciously, milling around in the author's head, the tractor, secondhand store event, took place. That was just the beginning. How to move the tractor from Eugene, OR, to Lasqueti Island, BC. Driving it from the second-hand store to his Eugene home was an adventure, full of apprehension.

As mentioned, while not being Paul Bunyan may seem to have been a disadvantage, belonging to the same species as Paul, that is, an inherently clever species, the author decided to remove the axles from the house trailer, located on Lasqueti Island, and transport them to Eugene, OR.

In Eugene, he had acquired some steel channel, 4" x 1 ½" x ¼" x 12 ft. in length, as part of a demolition project (removing an old service station) he had performed for a friend in the film processing business, for whom he did various projects in exchange for photographic services (many of which will be found illustrating this document).

Yes! The steel found its way into a thing that resembled a trailer (that is, a platform with a trailer hitch on one end, and the house trailer axles attached beneath, with 2 x 10 by 14 foot planks attached to the top).

The tractor was guided upon the home-made trailer, and held in place with pieces of chain using chain binders, wired shut, as a means of securing the tractor to the trailer. The whole was towed behind the 1974 Dodge pickup from Eugene OR. via the Mill Bay ferry, to French Creek, BC, where it was unloaded onto a barge (Palaquin), along with peripherals, for transport to the 'rock'. The Blue Ox had arrived.

It should be noted, however telescoped upon time, that the tractor was also used to further prepare the ground upon which would set any

proposed building; it was used to remove any loose debris, to get down to 'bedrock', as the case seemed. One place had a solid (non-conglomerate) outcropping of mother earth which more or less set the height of the base line of the building 'foundation'. Only one soft spot, located in one corner, was of concern, where it was found that a yellow clay deposit seemed somewhat insubstantial, when compared to the other.

Have we arrived at a beginning?

Rocks of various sizes were gathered, and placed. The wind-falls had been gathered; the base comprised of logs was soon to begin. Also the experimentation with log placement, scribing, notch shaping, and lengthwise excavation was to take place.

At this time, besides the blue ox, the necessary tools for continuing with the project must be put in evidence. The used Husky 266XP, the used Mac 10.10, and the Homelite XL-123 were the hewers, along with an axe, and chisels of various shapes. Also the P-Vee, an essential tool for rolling the logs, and otherwise 'jockeying' them into position. There were log 'dogs' and other handy devices for keeping the logs under control at all times, one being two pairs of angle iron pieces with teeth sawed into them, with a rod handle attached for easy location and movement. There was also the hook assembly from a P-Vee, with a shackle attached, which proved a valuable asset in rolling the logs, using a rope or chain attached to the tractor or a chain hoist, or 'come-along'. In the beginning, all fabrications of devices took place in Eugene; the log dogs, the toothed angle iron, and soon to be 'Alaska' mill, and the mechanical apparatus and rigging for what would eventually become the 'gin' pole.

To stay within bounds of time and progress, the construction had begun, with a half dozen small logs and poles, for defining a perimeter, that were placed on terra firma to get the feel of things, with short ones forming the base of wings. Then, these were substituted by real logs; and the next tier of logs, which were notched onto the base logs, with more shorter ones for wings. This was to become the base, whether for further log construction, or for a frame construction.

Part of this early construction phase also included a center support for a floor which was to span some 20 feet. The Alaska mill served to flatten these center supports. In addition it was decided at this time that floor joists would be made of salvaged beach logs, some of which were Douglas fir, hemlock, yellow cedar. These would be attached to the bottom tier of the long side of the building, with dovetailed notches, placed on 32" centers. The average diameter of the base logs was 16", the longest logs at 36 feet. The floor joists were, on average 6 to 7 inches in diameter @ 20 feet in length. The building would be formed into two

sections, placed at a 10° angle to one another, all on one level, the nominal square footage at 1000 sq. ft. The proposed roofing square footage approximated 2000 sq. ft.

Architectural considerations were minimal; the initial drawing was a sketch drawn by Charline, amplified by the author. As mentioned, a model, not as much architectural, as a practical construction, was made of doweling, notched to simulate the method of construction to be used.

There the author was, 56 years old, embarking on something new, in the bush. The first phase of construction had been completed before winter, and completely covered with tarps for the season. The base logs, the floor joists dovetailed into the base logs. The floor joists had also been leveled, mostly by Charline, using an adz, and the author finishing the ends with a draw knife. The leveling was accomplish by snapping a chalk line on each side of the joist, and adzing down to the marks. All together, there were some 43 joists, 20 feet long, some meeting at various angles because there were two sections to the emerging structure, meeting at the approximate 10° angle. Each joist needed to be relieved or shimmed to lay solidly on the center support logs.

While working our way to this stage, the idea of frame construction had evaporated. Logs needed to be acquired; trees needed to be dismembered. The extant advice was to fall the trees when the sap was 'down'. A cold November provided the occasion of the first fallings; and a freezing January the second. In all, some 45 trees which, on average, were intended to yield two logs each, the average large end diameter measuring between 16 to 18 inches. In addition, 6 trees of a slightly smaller diameter were felled for ridge poles and purlins. A few others were salvaged blow-downs. One experimental tree had been fallen out of season, which yielded a slippery dangerous log, that eventually turned black from mold. Another had been felled in February after the sap had begun to rise to provide a series of short pieces; these did not mold, and were easy to peel, but, with time, notably shrank in diameter.

The trees were limbed and bucked to length, and winched out of the woods with the wrecking truck, and dragged and piled by the tractor and maneuvered onto three separate decks for peeling; shorter pieces were piled randomly, and the ridge pole pieces piled together off the ground in a separate grouping. All trees were of the Douglas Fir species. And all the roof rafters were fabricated from young Fir trees.

Logs. *Pseudotsuga menziesii,* (/*Pseudo tsuga* - false hemlock; *menziesii* - after Archibald Menzies [[the Latinization of his name stems from a long botanical/scientifico tradition, and man's compulsive urge to name everything (using a Latin lexicon???); other considerations enter into this whole tradition which might fill volumes if one were to research its origins and extensions]], its Scottish discoverer [big as a tree, who

could miss it?]) Douglas Spruce, Fir, Yellow Fir, Red Pine, Red Spruce, Red Fir, Oregon Pine.

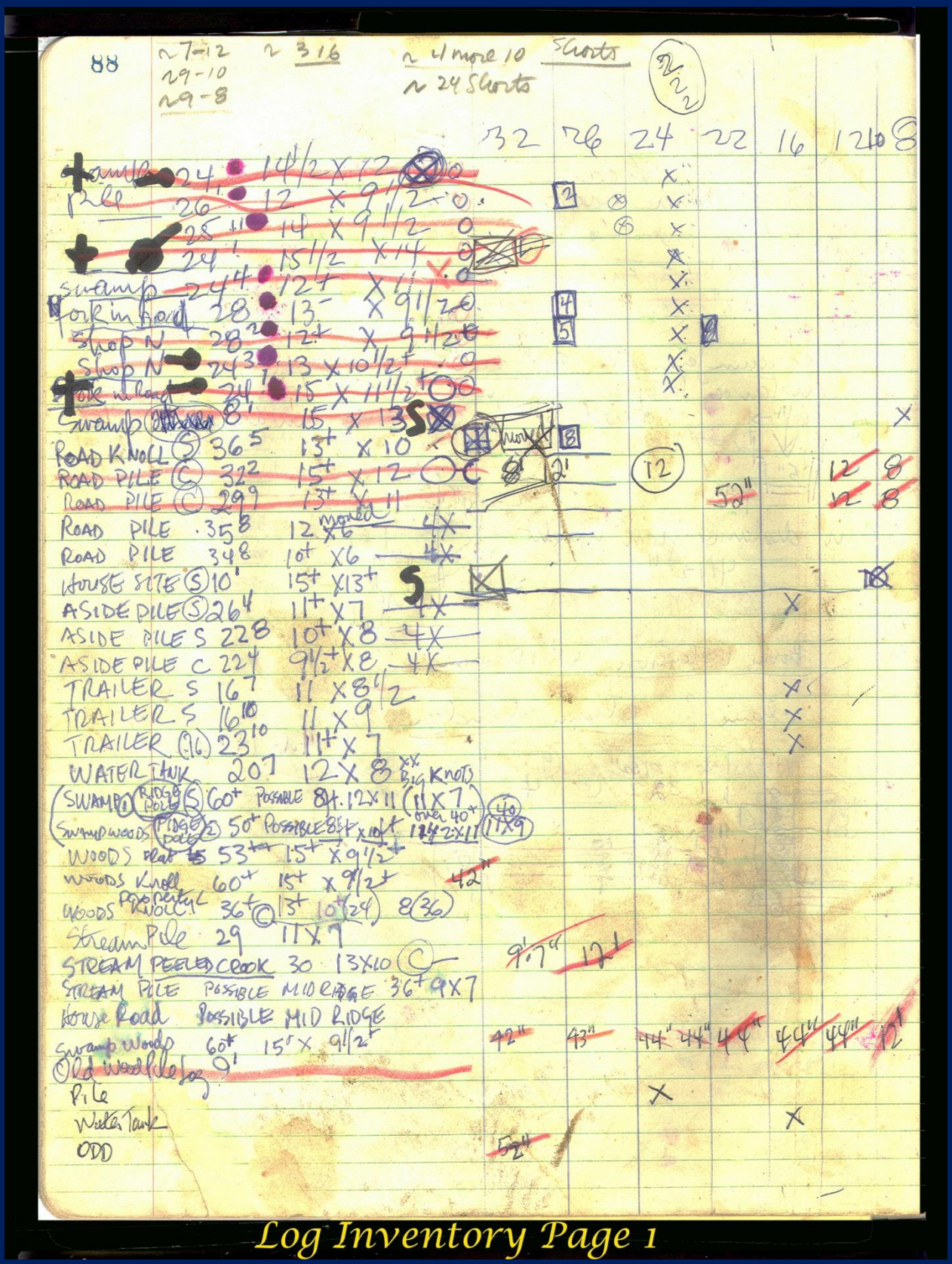
What you might read about this tree does not pertain to the things you might find nowadays, because man has consumed most of what had existed, for things like ships masts, to peeler logs, for making plywood, timbers, as well as the usual findings amongst the building materials in your local building supply store; what remains are the scrawny attempts at sustained yield, or 'second growth'. Nonetheless, enough log house building Douglas Fir trees of a certain size and straightness were found on the 10 acre property to make it seem feasible to attempt the project. Initially, all straight trees, of a certain diameter, were flagged with iridescent tape. On the ten acres these were scattered, finding the distribution fairly even. Each tree was cut approximately 18 to 24 inches above the ground, and after removal, the stump was cut again, close to ground level. The limbs were left mostly where they were cut off; and the tree tops were piled for eventual use as fire wood; rather exposed to the elements, most of this material rotted over time, but a neighbor did get some of it to burn before such an eventuality.

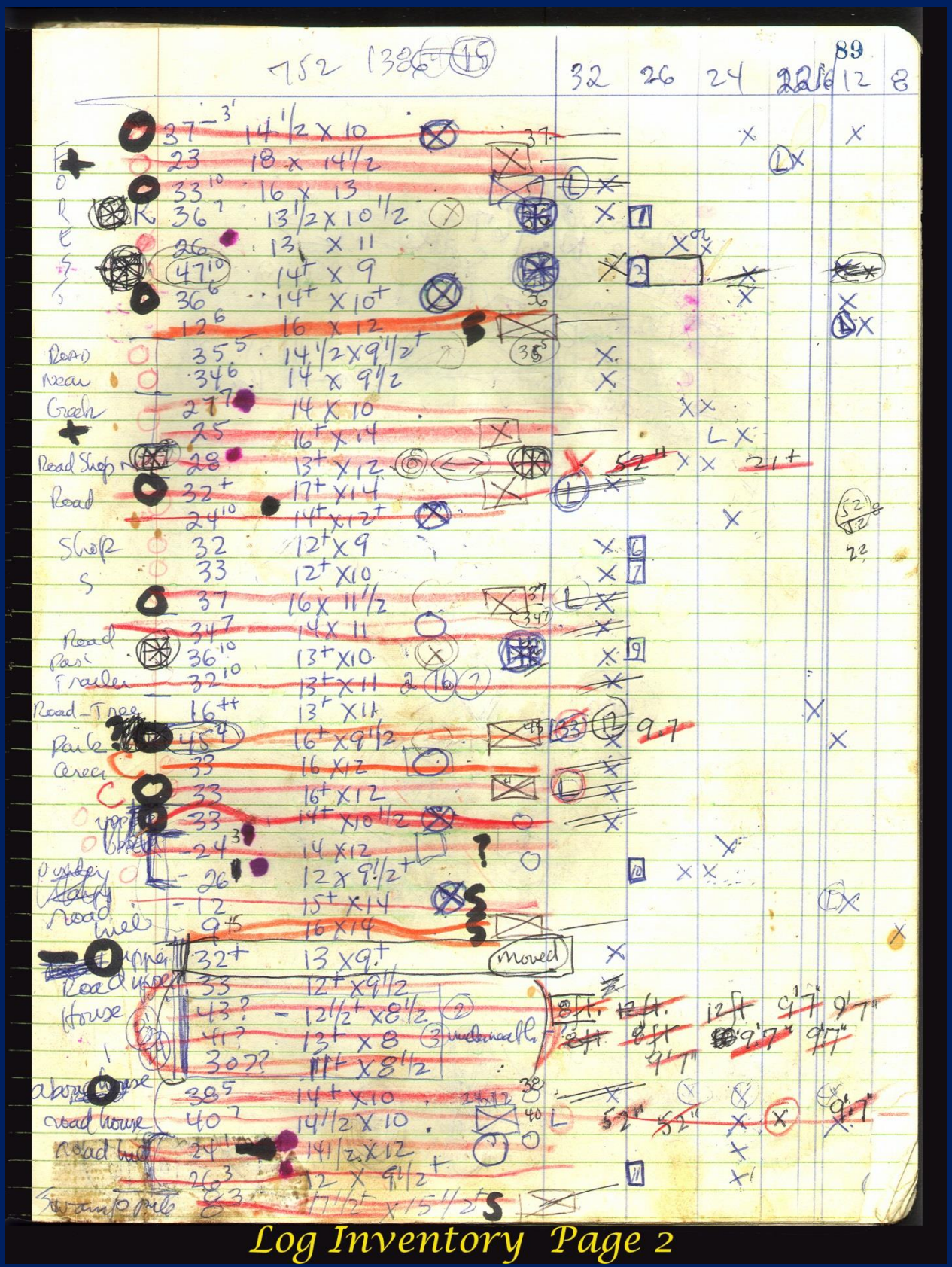
Accumulating Raw Materials

Most of the log peeling was accomplished during a three week period

in March, when Charline could get away from the lab. As mentioned, the

logs were placed on 'decks' off the ground, and systematically peeled with home Made 'spuds', fashioned from pieces of truck spring. A handle approximately three feet long was fitted with a tennis ball on the opposite end to cushion the palm of the hand that did the pushing. The three inch wide blades were sharpened like a chisel with one side flat, the other angled with a ¾" to one inch face. One blade was shaped into a curved corners. The bark was firmly attached to the layer beneath, which required much effort to remove in small pieces. The idea was to remove the bark down to a layer just above the finished surface, where one encountered a stringy fibrous reddish layer. The intent was not to cut into the proposed finished surface. Some of the reddish fibrous layer was left in dimples, rather than risk damaging the proposed finished surface. At the time we had not decided how to finish the surface. The log house builder used bleach on his log interior to control mold and to create a uniformly brighter surface. It also made the surface easier to clean. As it eventuated, we did nothing to the surface of the logs. In between each joint, during assembly, we used TIMBOR (disodium octaborate tetrahydrate), (acquired in 3 x 50 lb. sacks from Permachink), a fine granular preparation, which was dissolved in boiling water, and applied while a hot solution (if not applied hot, the borate would precipitate, leaving behind a whitish deposit on the log surface.) In all, 150 gallons of solution was used between the joints during assembly.





It requires some restraint not to leap ahead, when one is recalling

It requires some restraint not to leap ahead, when one is recalling; attempting to recall, a step by step process. As the author writes, the building is finished, and has been occupied for nearly twenty years. It has mostly validated itself; nothing radical has happened to change our minds towards the method. Thirteen years ago, a 320 sq. ft. wing was added. It was of frame construction, using sawn, planed, t&g cedar, pine and Douglas fir, from the property, using a rented mill, its construction echoing somewhat the log construction, by using a log base, and a log ridge pole, an all wood interior and exterior, plus window size and distribution, along with the same type of flooring, all similar to the original, even with the same style gable windows set in a 2 x 6 t&g wall.

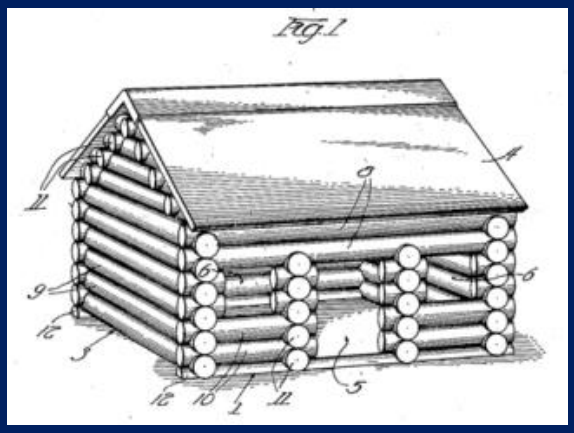
As this is being written, one might characterize it as an ego trip, when it merely an attempt at public service. Most of the work for this opus is yet to be done. The scanning of all the photos, the taking of photos that illustrate the tools, photos showing the results of years of the effects of heat on the log interior joints compared to the exterior joints (which retain their ambient moisture).

There is the incessant plodding, just as there was the plodding during the building. The author is now 83, with a lot less energy, and requires a lot more rationale to continue on, when things, in general, mean a lot less than they had in his younger days, even as short a time as ten years ago. In a way, he is hoping for some reanimation of his spirit and his motivations by undertaking this public service project. Knowing fully that the end of life is beckoning, being felt in his bones, in the effort required to rise from the comfortable chair, staring out to sea, recalling things that never were, but might have been; recalling with deeply felt cynicism that man is doomed to the terrible sameness, as he labors on, or attempts to destroy, the infamous Tower of Babel. And the horrors of things to come.

The author had retired from the Lasqueti Fire Department, after 8 ½ years, as he was approaching 82, realizing that he was hindrance, rather than an asset. Everyone must know his limitations. As a writer, the author needs to learn his limitations. As a past log house builder, he learned his limitations, some of which will be reflected in this tome. Part of this undertaking, at this age, is somewhat confounded by the mere fact of not remembering what has already been written. This means that every editing session is confronted with decisions whether to leave a repetitive nuance or to excise it, whether to shift the tense forward or backward.

The author doesn't know if it is fair to say he was duly impressed when he learned that his most favorite humanitarian President,

Abraham Lincoln, was raised in a log cabin (his first three years); or whether his near favorite toy, Lincoln Logs, were somehow subliminally responsible for such a rash action as attempting to do something he had never done before, starting at age 56, to perform this, yet to be imagined, public service, mindfully, in the bush.



Also, as this is being written, we have another home in Eugene OR, where the author has lived for 53 years, when he has not been living elsewhere. Most of that home was fashioned by him, with all cedar exterior and interior, surfaces left to weather as they might. It is home in its familiarity, but is also in a city, that overcivilized place with barking dogs, motorized everything, a noisy disquieting place, with prying eyes, and solicitors, and Jehovah Witnesses invading one's privacy. Yet, there we are, condemned by our habits. Even in the bush in Canada, there is no escape from the ovedrcivilized part, the barking dog, and the motorized clamor to this Century, and the too-near humanity to whom one cannot relate; Yes!, even the Jehovahs make their appearance. Condemned again by our own lack of portability, anchored by our fixed domicile, and our heavy possessions, the things, of a so-called existence, and holy shit, Civilization!.

The author is pretending to let the reader know that one does not write in a vacuum; in a bell jar, as it was. Humanity is with us wherever we go, even in the space station, on the moon, or Mars; or GAWD HEP US, next door.

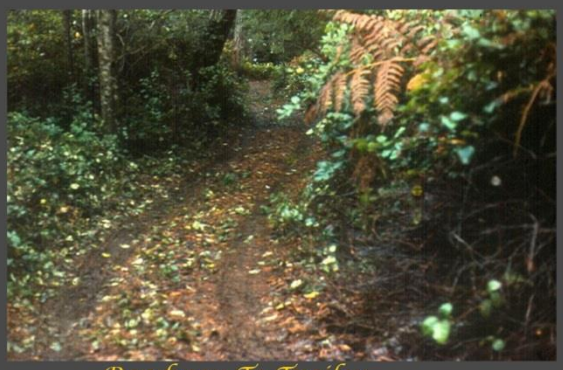
Does it help to know that we are spinning on our axis at 1000 miles per hour, or that we are revolving around our sun at ~70,000 miles per hour? And how fast are we catapulting through the Universe? Tthe trees, and the logs, and all our tools ride with us. Yet, it is only gravity that seems to be a pain in the ass. So, there you are, ten feet off the ground, on a catwalk, and you drop your whatever. If there is nobody around to fetch (gofor) your whatever, you have to find your way down to retrieve the whatever, then get back up to what you were doing with whatever, and hope that you don't knock whatever into the gravitational field again, because if you do, it is not only a pain in the

ass, it is a double pain in the ass. Many's the descendings and ascendings in this manner, as stupid as it may seem. Curses do not help, and prayer has never been tried. Being one's own gofor gets the Lord's name taken in vain on a regular basis. Speaking of the Lord, while climbing the extension ladder, leaned precariously against the limb of a tree, and retrieving a part that had been used in the gin pole apparatus, albeit diverted for a mounting for a Broadband antenna (more public service), the author had thought, as he often does in straightened circumstances: 'the cruelest thing they did to JC was to take away the ladder after they put him on the, you know, yeah, the cross'. Charline has told the author that kind of speculation will not get him into heaven.

.

There the author was, spinning about the axis at 1000 mph and

Trailer

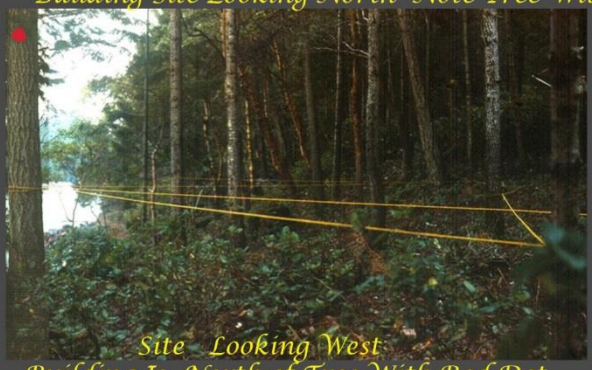


Roadway To Trailer

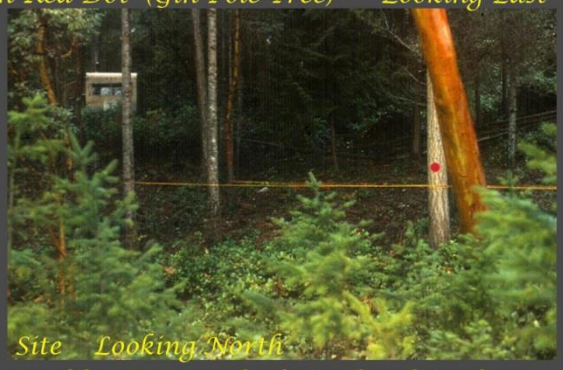
Roadway To Water And Building Site

Fork In Raodways To Trailer And Water

Building Site Looking North Note Tree With Red Dot (Gin Pole Tree) Looking East



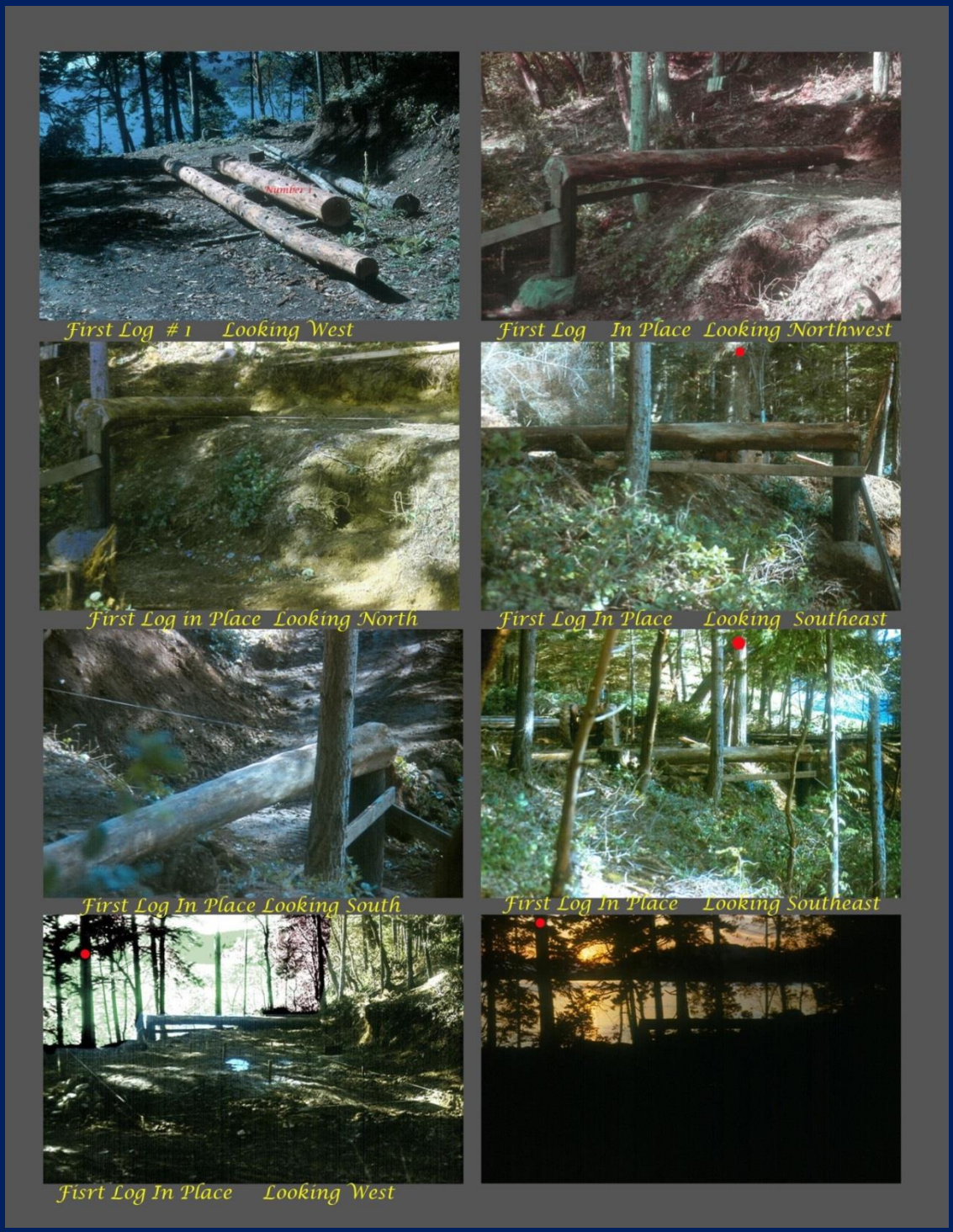
Site Looking West
Building Is North of Tree With Red Dot



Site Looking North
Building Is North of Tree With Red Dot

revolving around the sun at ~ 70,000 mph, defying gravity on an extension ladder. Sandra Bullock had it easy; why she was astounded when she did not win an Oscar, that's her secret. Sancho made no

Secret of how he felt about Oscar. So Sandra, don't let it throw you. Another cross to bare.



To Continue. The author rounded up most of the gin pole apparatus, the various tools, and gadgets, and found most of the photographs (many slides) where the progress is recorded, and which hopefully will help to make sense of this epistle.

#1 & #2 Are In Place

#3 & #4 Are In Place

'Alaska' Milling Mid-floor Support

Midfloor Support East Section

Midfloor Support West Section

Laying Out Of Floor Joists

Laying Out Of Floor Joists

Floorjoist Layout W/#1 thru #7 Logs In Place

Floorjoist Layout w/ #8 Log Roughnotched

Shaping # 8 Log North End

Shaping # * Log South End

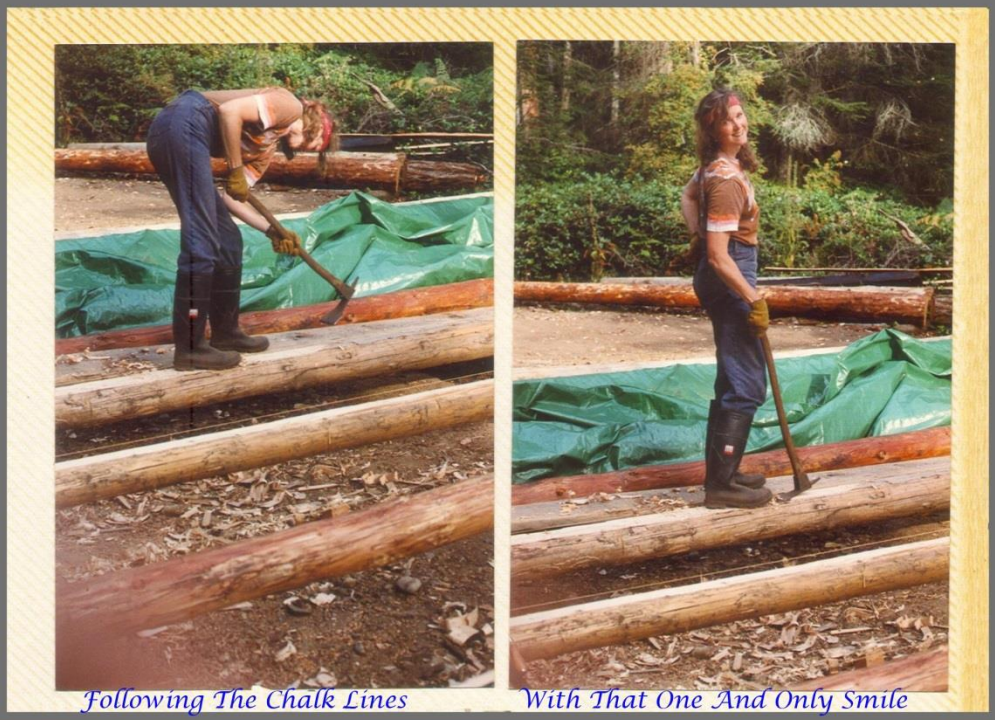
Working On # 8 Log On East End

8 Log Ready For The PV

8 Log East End Ready To Be Plopped

8 In Place W/ Mac 10-10 And Husky 266 XP

As he worked, the whole structure became covered with an array of



the ubiquitous blue tarps and some green and orange tarps. For the

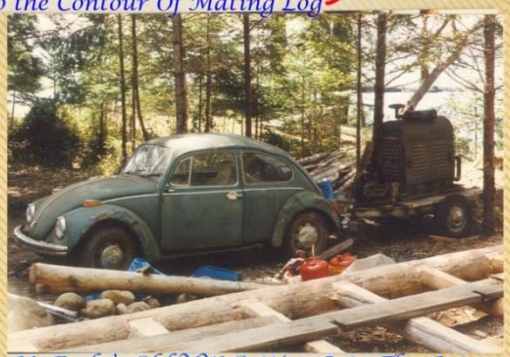
most part, though rather worse for the wear, after three winters use in the windy Georgia Straits, the tarps kept the wood from exposure to precipitation. The balance of the logs yet to be used were peeled and had also been covered with heavy black polyethylene sheet. A curious thing about the 10 mil black plastic sheet. Where the sheet actually touched a log beneath, one would find tiny holes piercing the plastic

Working The Chalk Lines (In Pairs)

Finishing Touches With Draw Knife

Floor Joists Dovetailed And Shaped To the Contour Of Mating Log

A Blue Ox Doing Its Thing



McFeely's Old VW Getting Into The Act

The Blue Oxen

Covered For The Winter

where the pin worms had found their way into the wood to do their thing (mostly in the 'sap wood').

The author looked forward to removing the tarps, and all the super-structure that had been installed to keep them in place. He was hoping for a serious, more enthusiastic continuance with a prospect for a roof by the fall rainy season. Much to be done, although much stands in readiness.

One must always be prepared for equipment failure; no amount of cursing will cure the ailments of machinery on the fritz. The author has been using three chainsaws, each for a specific task. Periodically, one saw has had to do it all while detention and threats have been allowed to act upon the ones that have failed muster. The1942 tractor has been the most reliable machine, with all its creaks and groans; he asks a lot of it. Occasionally a fitting in the hydraulics would break, or a copper line would rupture. The truck has provided its share of nightmares, although it has been useful at times. The generators have consumed their own amount of time, time being of little consequence to them. The gin pole has performed sterlingly, as has the Chinese chain hoist, although each has required periodic attentions. The gin pole let out a cracking sound which meant the author must provide more support throughout its middle for the balance of the duration of its assigned task, or replace it entirely, which eventually transpired.

The author has slowly become aware of the lurking admiration that comes with having started and continued this building process through 'thick and thin'. He had not sought any appraisal of his efforts, lest it was he that had already built a log structure should approve. His comments have remained favorable; this has been sufficient for the author. He has learned from others, to whom the other builder has revealed other opinions, that he might even be doing unnecessary things; i.e., becoming too 'tiddly'. While this is not a criticism per se, it does reflect that the critic himself would build differently now than he had originally, taking more shortcuts, as do the roadside kit log house builders. And further, what might appear tiddly to another, is perhaps only a concession of the author overcompensating for his own lack of knowledge of what he is purportedly doing. He knows secretly where he did violate his own standards in these matters, where he let something go that he may have judged to be an inferior accomplishment; he rationalizes that the materials are imperfect, and that to attempt to make them perfect through some kind of paranoid workmanship is to play into the hands of the devil more than the gods.

One thing the lurking admiration does, now that the author has become aware of it, is compromise him to remain faithful to the minimum standards that he set, while the temptation exists to rush along to the finish, sacrificing certain parameters toward that end.

There is something comforting in the admiration that comes from certain individuals, not professionals per se, but ordinary workman whom one has come to know and appreciate for whom and what they are. With their own hands and brains they have done things; from their experience they carry a ready knowledge to the other man's task.

The author can assure those who will ask that what he does is not done to impress, even when there are those who are impressed. He did not choose a most difficult task intentionally to challenge himself. He must admit discouragement at various stages, even to the point of continuing only because of having started, if you can fathom that one. He has relented to something from which he could not retreat, although two laminectomies and heart surgery ought provide ample excuse to find another way. His mother says, "The Irish are not Quitters." She said that mostly about herself, who lived to 97, herself a recipient of two laminectomies at age 88 and a burst appendix at 87.

He cannot say the reasons for building the log structure make a whole lot of sense, since all he really wants to do is sit with his feet cocked up, staring at the sunset. The sunset is really what matters. Being cozy and warm are factors that have their own appeal. But if he had fallen by the wayside before the project was completed, all would have gone for naught. Charline would be burdened with something not worth finishing for herself, and a property whose value would be greatly enhanced if a completed building were there for her to market. At least that much could be gained. As you can see there were many diverse aspects to consider in connection with building this particular house.

Partaking of the amenities seems remote from the days as they unfold. When the warmer weather returns, the feel of the air leads him to muse upon the distant horizons as we have traveled in our boat. He yearns to be off somewhere new, just moving through the vistas and exploring new shores, without a care, without contact with the world of the incredible pestilence. Then riding at anchor listening to the sounds of the sea, perhaps becoming too bleary eyed and anaesthetized with a flagon of beer, becoming the profound cynic rhapsodizing on the wonders of the world; and dreaming dreams he would not confide to a soul.

Well, plenty of time to douse you with the poetizing, and the cynicism, his most desperate proclivity. Akin to that is the wry appreciation of things that do not go according to plan. His constant companion is GRAVITY (all manner of). All things are possessed of a spirit that tends to seek its place on the planet. Flight is natural only to birds and clouds. All else seeks its roots, or rest, upon terra firma. The author had not counted the number of times the chisel or the mallet, or

the pencil, or the gadget had suddenly dived from the heights, only to lie inane upon the earth below. When one is standing at ground level the task of reanimating that which lies still at one's feet is easily achieved, but as one attains to the precipitous heights, it seems the frequency of exciting dives and retrievals increases markedly. One discovers how much the more his weariness accrues from what must seem a ridiculous behavior, up and down, down and up, as though one were a yo-yo, or a film loop, played forward, then backward endlessly, as in some absurd cartoon. There are those who have suggested the loan of a grandchild, who would be stationed somewhere handy in order to levitate, Lazarus-like, that which has fallen (known as a gofor). Maxim: The further the proximity from the integument the seeming greater persuasion of the incredible force, as with Orpheus and Eurydice, the further from Hell, the greater his temptation.

Perhaps already the author has said too much that does not pertain. He has intimated this is not a how-to, but an excuse for writing. Most likely it will remain so, something for the future generations, who seek to learn something of their primogenitors. He wants you to note his optimism.

His father left behind a dreadful thing called 'autobis' to be directed to his older son's care upon his demise. Perhaps because father was not a writer, the author, who struggles with the word, winces at his pretense. He feels embarrassed that this man who held himself up as the shining light, should fall so far into the darkened hallways in a solipsistic harangue, which dulls the glow. By saying this the author supposes he prejudices the reader. He has said even less complimentary things of his father elsewhere. When one sets himself up as a shining light, he must earn the veneration he seeks. The danger exists in too many utterances. Father's image would have benefited through SILENCE.

There will be others who will have the last word.

Meanwhile.

Logs. *Pseudotsuga menziesii*, (/*Pseudo tsuga* - false hemlock; *menziesii* - after Archibald Menzies [[the Latinization of his name stems from a long botanical/sientifico tradition, and man's compulsive urge to name everything (using a Latin lexicon???); other considerations enter into this whole tradition which might fill volumes if one were to research its origins and extensions]], its Scottish discoverer [big as a tree, who could miss it?]) Douglas Spruce, Fir, Yellow Fir, Red Pine, Red Spruce, Red Fir, Oregon Pine.

Allan Mackie, who has operated a log-building school in the Prince George region of British Columbia, Canada, and whose techniques have

been followed in our endeavor, has recommended felling trees in the fall and winter during the cold months (dormant months) of the trees yearly cycle. The sap will be 'down', the tree will be lighter, dryer etc. The climate upon the island was different than that found in the B. C. 'interior'; warmer and wetter. However, luck was a bit on the author's side when he began the first batch of falling; a cold November; and later, for the remainder, a freezing January. A few trees felled in the warmer first week of February (a last minute decision to round out the number required for all the short pieces) proved to have found the sap already 'risen' in the period of one week; and producing a very different kind of log as well. A few windfalls were also available to begin the project, and during the subsequent winters other trees were blown down in wintry storms. The best quality logs (perhaps 80% of those used) were yielded from the two colder periods when he did the falling.

One experimental log felled earlier in the project when the sap had fully risen and new green shoots were emerging, proved to be the worst log of all, for it was heavy, extremely slippery after peeling, and not long after peeling, turned black with mold. Both dangerous and disappointing. Another tree (a blow down, vintage unknown) was salvaged from a neighbor's property; the logs obtained from this very straight tree (the attraction) proved a lot less useful than first appearances promised, for rotting had begun to take place in the sap wood (otherwise a very sound piece of wood).

A tree was felled in such a manner as to make it possible, once limbed and bucked for the truck winch to pull it out to a roadway where the tractor could then drag it and pile it off the ground. There were a few difficult trees that required blocks, ropes, wedges, or a jack, in order to force it to fall in the desired direction. Only one tree 'hung up' in the crotch of another tree. This was removed by making several wraps of the winch cable about the tree with the force of the winch applied at an angle (through a block secured to yet another tree) that would tend to prevent the butt end from digging too deeply into the ground as the tree was spun around like a drill by the cable. As the tree was working itself through the crotch of the other, the limbs of the fallen were being snapped off as well. Occasionally with a larger butt-ended log, 16 to 20 inches in diameter he would use the truck to tow the log with the butt end suspended two or three feet above the ground. He did not do this very often because the truck did not have sufficient braking to prevent certain downhill momentums gained by log and truck, especially when the ground was wet. The truck best served as a platform for a winch, albeit served by the 'Dutchmans'. The power and slow manageable speed of the tractor, coupled with the 500 pound elevator weight, and the calcium chloride ballasted tires, was equal to the task for most of the other maneuverings of the logs.

As the Log Opus thus continues, let the author reassure you, the log house has heard it all; a scandalous variety of expressions and epithets are incorporated into the building. If its design and method of construction do not contain all that is necessary to hold it together, the cussing that is splattered and stuck crosswise in all the joints should about do it. The author is an inveterate cusser, and used the stuff freely as a solution to any recalcitrant log or otherwise deficient participant. And GRAVITY was met with his own, creating a very 'heavy' discussion indeed.

The RETREAT had flowed naturally enough, from the very beginning. Solipsistic he may be, but he feels some legitimacy in his proclivities. The need for a Retreat (taken literally one supposes) has existed as a REAL goal for as long as he is able to remember.

Because his parents did as parents do; their inevitable incontrovertible comingling hast brought about this appurtenance. Choosing to belong, or not to belong, may seem one's very own decision to make, but in fact from the very beginning choice has been precluded. One backs away in horror as he feels the world about him as an appropriated thing he must wrest from others. The others, like himself, are but transient entities, pushing, shoving, and elbowing their way somewhere. That somewhere serves merely as an excuse for activity; billions of activities, like a colony of insects.

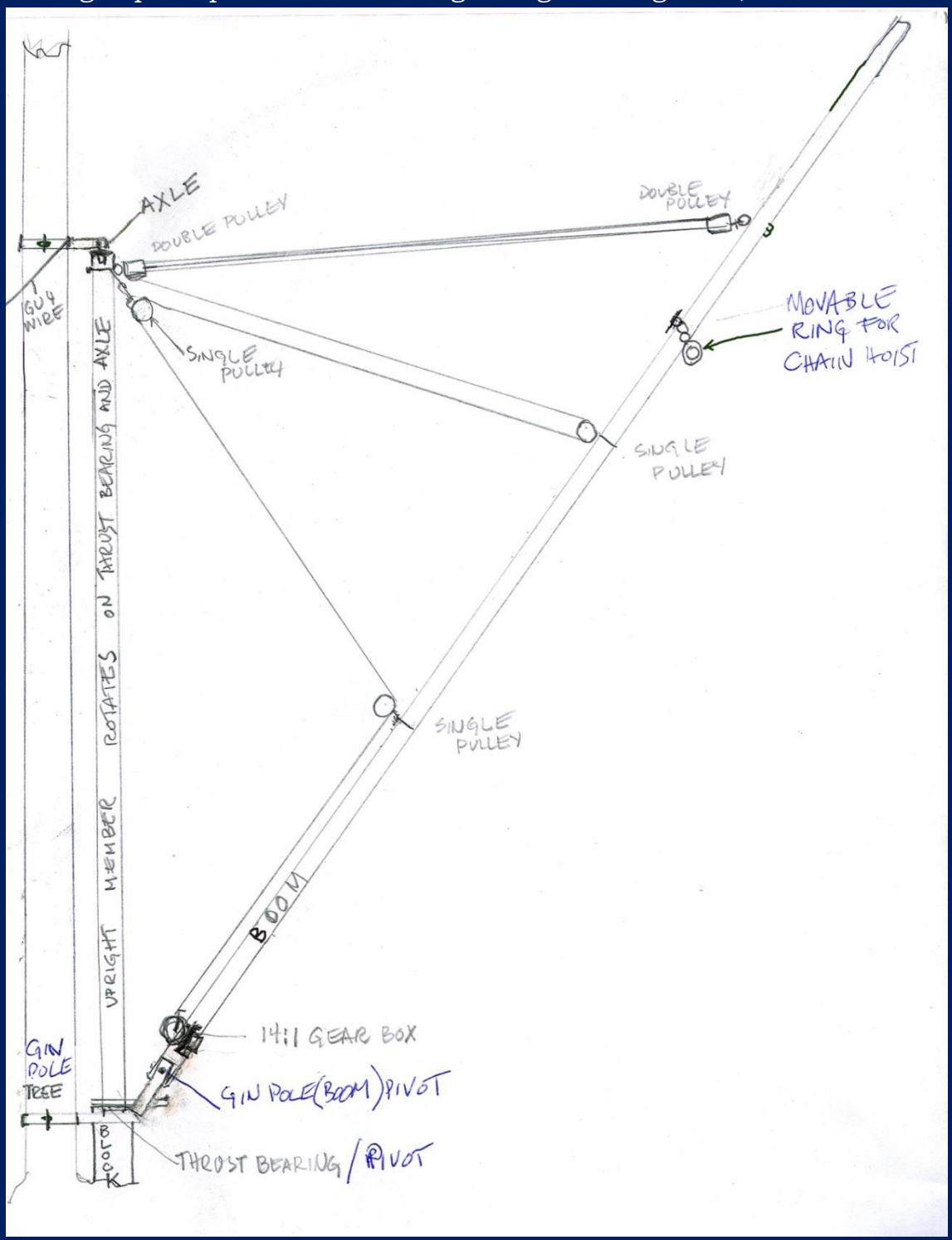
"Where had he been all these years? What is this thing that is happening, this thing that is dictated from the outside by people who have taken over, who have appropriated something that belongs to him, whether or not he claims it. He has been brushed aside.?" Does he really care?

The author has just removed 15 pages of irrelevancies (some of which the reader can find in *pleasepassthetruth.org.* In truth, let us continue with matters necessary to reveal the secrets discovered and revealed in the Bush.

Gin Pole Design, Rigging, and Use.

'All well and good'; a Lasqueti friend suggested a gin pole (boom), for lifting and maneuvering the logs. Then he took a powder. The author needed to devise some way to move a log weighing anywhere between 800 to 1600 lbs. with some degree of confidence and control. He thought about the gin pole (boom) idea for some time. Alternative to this was a series of pulleys rigged between trees with a block that could roll along the rigging to which one would attach a sling to hold the log in place This general design has been included in most modern log house building books. Ostensibly one would move the apparatus by pulling on

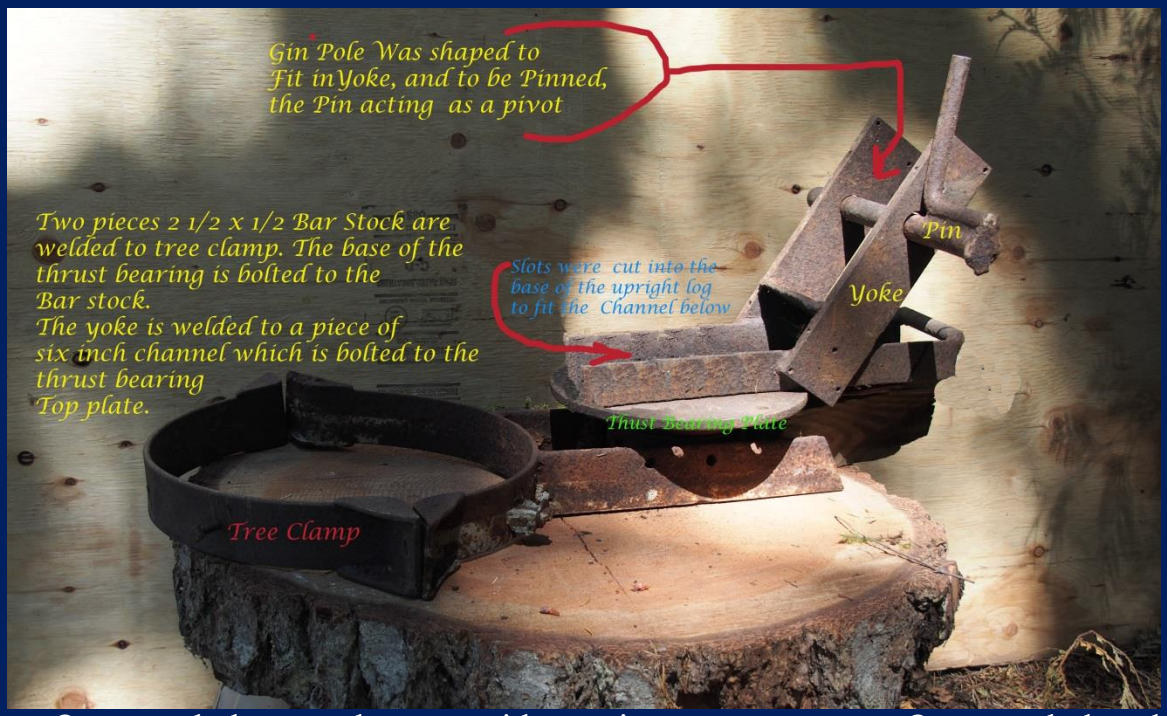
a rope attached to a vehicle. Well, Yeah! Yet another way also shown in some log-house building books, is to set up an inclined plane, and roll the logs up the plane onto the burgeoning building. Well, Yeah!



Fortuitously, there was a straight Douglas Fir tree left standing next to the approximate middle of the proposed construction, alongside, but

outside of the proposed structure, located on the southwest, south side of the proposed. The gin pole idea could make good use of the tree.

You have to understand that much cogitation was required to implement this gin pole idea. And what is being written here is comprised of more hindsight than foresight.

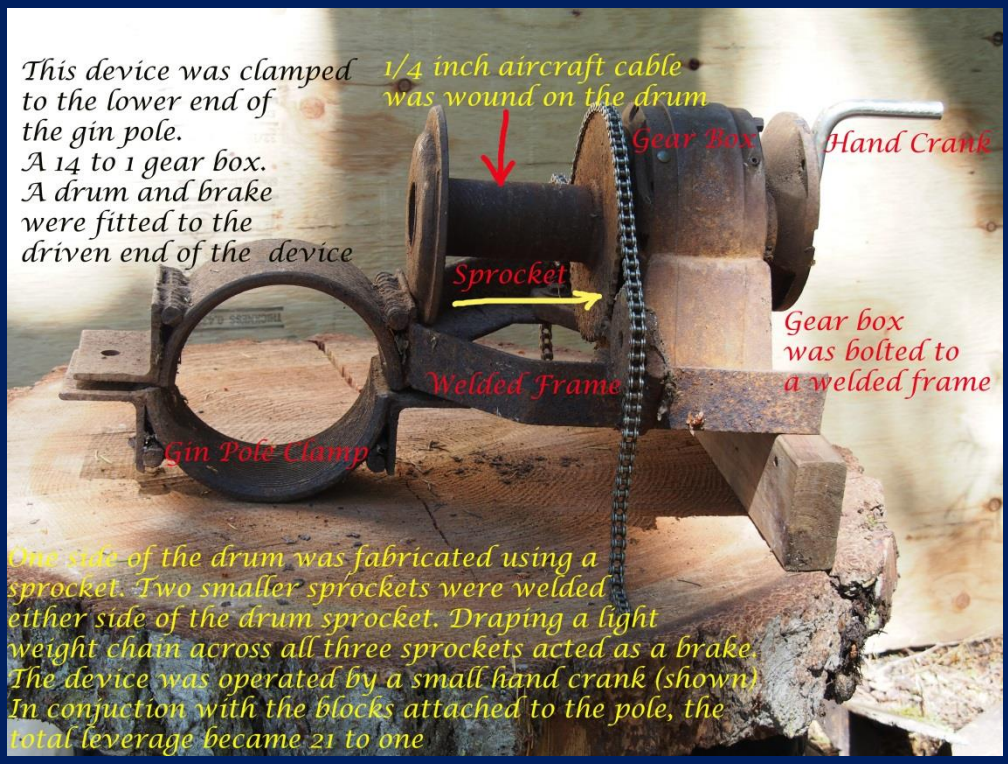


One needed to anchor to said tree in some manner. One needed to be

able to swing (rotate) (from right to left; left to right) a boom, approximately 180 degrees, from its anchor point. One needed to be able to raise and lower the boom some 60 degrees of arc. Also, after lifting the very first log, it became apparent that the tree needed to be guyed, since it would lean

out of perpendicularity with a weight placed upon it from the side. (You know [the Greek] Archimedes.) This was accomplished by using some ½ inch metal cable removed from the wrecking truck winch (which was replaced with new [aircraft] cable) of a more practical (for handling) diameter. The tree was guyed from the top clamp holding the moving

element, in three different directions. Tension was created by using come-alongs (hand operated cable winches).



To reconnoiter a little. What we have is a tree, and attached to the tree, a vertical parallel member (approximately 20 feet in height) that is free to pivot at its base, and held in place with another pivot at its top. The base and the top are rigidly clamped to the tree with pivots being fabricated as part of the clamping mechanism. At the base was a machined journal that could be packed with grease and would act as a thrust bearing; supported beneath by a heavy block of wood between the ground and the base of the pivot. At the top, a front end automobile axle was used, attached, using the wheel mounting holes (with the bolts removed, with lag bolts substituted).

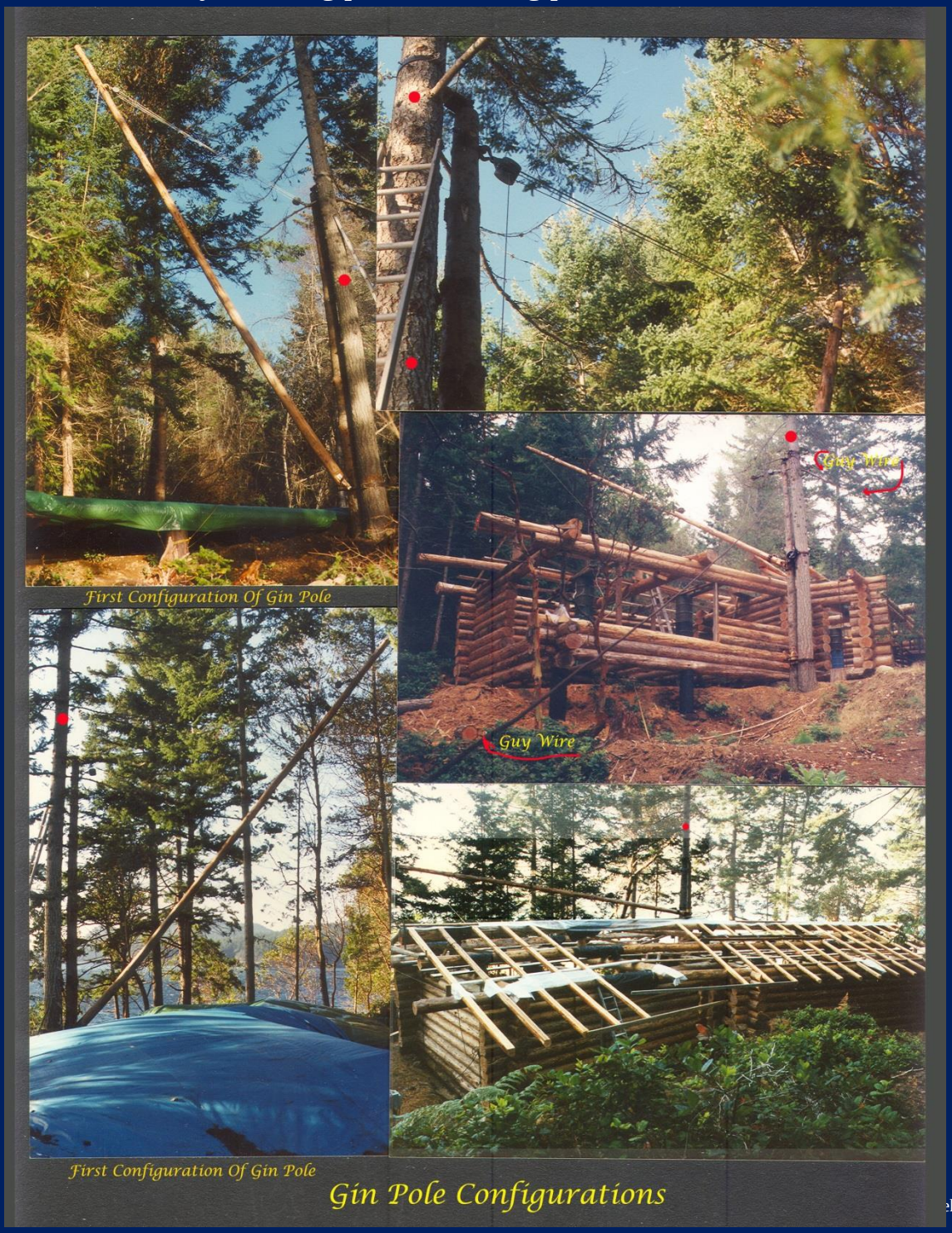
The vertical member was slotted at its base to fit into a piece of six inch steel channel, pointing .upwards, attached to the base pivot. This slotting arrangement provided a good coupling into the vertical member, thereby assuring positive driving power.

Attached to the base pivot mounting was a bracket arm (yoke) with two holes through which could be inserted a pin into a hole drilled into the attached end of the proposed wooden boom (approximately 32 feet in length).

The gin tree diameter was approximately 15“ at the base mounting clamp, and approximately 13” at the top mounting clamp. The parallel

upright member was approximately 9” at its base and approximately 6” at the top. The boom was approximately 7” in diameter at the pivot end, with flat areas cut to allow it to fit into the bracket yoke. At the very end of the boom, the diameter was approximately five inches.

To repeat: The vertical member was slotted at its base to fit into a piece of six inch steel channel, pointing upwards, attached to the base pivot. This slotting arrangement provided a good coupling into the vertical member, thereby assuring positive driving power.



200 Feet of ¼ inch aircraft cable was used to run through a series of pulleys to raise and lower the boom. Pulleys were attached at three points, and a chain hoist was used to be positioned on the boom (using a chain loop attached with a single bolt through two chain openings.) Attached to the chain was a solid steel ring through which one could easily insert the chain hoist hook.

Although this was not the original design, at the base of the boom was clamped a 14/1 gear reduction box that had a spool/drum mechanism machined to fit a protruding driven axle. The driving end was served by a short hand cranking handle. All in all, with the 14/1 reduction and the series of pulleys the mechanical advantage was 21/1. An object weighing ~ 1000 pounds would appear to weigh ~ fifty pounds, easily lifted with a short hand crank. A brake was made by attaching a sprocket to the drum,

and welding a toothed gear on either side of the drum over which a chain could be easily draped. The original design did not envision the 14:1 gear box, but a block anchored to the base of the upright member, reeved to the tractor winch. Although this worked it required too much disassembly and reassembly on the tractor winch that it did not prove feasible. It also made the tractor useless for anything else. Fortunately the gear box was in the author's possession in his shop in Oregon; and somehow the old noggin put two and two together to solve the problem in the best way possible, short of other more ingenious devices. It was truly Archimedean to crank away with a short stub of bent metal to obtain such a resultant. One often thinks of Zorba with his mining contraptions.

All of this required some trial and error to adjust it so that everything worked as it needed to, in order to get the job done. At some midway point

of the project, the boom cracked after a couple years of weathering and a heavy weight on the end of the reach. At the time the boom had pulleys attached at only two places. A third was added to reduce the bending strain on the boom. The cracked boom was replaced.

Also, beyond midway; the pivot point for the base of the gin pole needed to be raised (approximately ten feet) on the vertical member so the boom would clear the structure, as it grew, in the vicinity of the apparatus. This required some special brackets, one to provide a pivot for the center of the vertical member which had no support in the middle (tending to bend in the middle), as well as a new clamping device to hold the pivoting end of the boom in place. This required a new bracket (yoke) with the two holes through which could be inserted the pin which held the boom in place on its pivoting end. This new bracket needed to be clamped to the vertical member. Right above this attachment point, one located the support, for the middle of the vertical member, in turn, attached to the tree.

A log would be maneuvered with the tractor along one side of the structure. The gin pole would be positioned with its chain hoist, in turn, positioned to lift the log at its weight balance mid-point. All logs were lifted in this manner, and once clear of the area, were maneuvered by a rope attached to the end of the boom. As long as the perpendicularity of the vertical member (attached to the tree) was preserved, it was an easy enough task to swing the boom, with the log hanging free, by pulling on the line attached to the end of the boom.

In his machine shop the author had the thrust bearing, something that had been discarded during a cleanup in his place of employment (something he had retrieved for mounting a piece of wood for carving). He had also the front axle contraption was obtained in another cleanup of steel that was being sold by a friend. The gear box was acquired during a cleanup of stuff that a friend in the photography business wasn't using for anything. The other parts were 'crudely' fabricated from pieces of junk steel that the author had acquired from salvage yards. The tree clamps were fashioned from 5/16 x 2 ½ inch flat bar shaped with gusseted tabs drilled for ½ inch bolts. (These bands also had short bolts strategically installed, drilled and tapped 5/16-18 x 1 1/2 inch for screwing into the tree in order to prevent sideways slipping.) The upright member and the boom clamps were fabricated from 6", 7", and 8" threaded pipe couplings, cut in half with tabs welded at right angles, and drilled for ½ inch bolts. The rest of

the apparatus was fabricated in the author's shop in Eugene, either by machining or welding. Things emerged more through mechanical instinct than by actual design.

The wooden pulleys with metal hooks and metal sheaves were Navy Surplus. The heavy steel pulleys, the bulk of the chain, and the chain binders were found in second hand stores, and other gadgets were either fabricated by the author, or came along at the right time to serve a particular purpose (for example, the chain and ring thing (probably used in chaining log booms) that was used for locating the chain hoist on the boom).

The gear box needed mounting hardware fashioned, also the drum fabricated to fit on the driven end of the mechanism, as well as attaching the sprocket braking device. By guess and By Golly!

All in all, this 'gin pole' device performed well, and was necessary for a single person constructing such a building by himself, given, as has been indicated, the weight of some of the logs. And it was additionally important when it came time to install the purlins, and the ridge poles: these pieces, long, and heavy, and the highest in the structure. In hindsight, the author cannot imagine any particular improvement on what became the eventual design; a hand-operated device, costing little, and serving better than anything recommended. A crane would have done as much at a prohibitive cost. Also the logistics for acquiring a crane, most likely at a Richie brothers auction, transporting it to the site, not to mention feeding a noisy apparatus its fuel, and the cost of maintenance over the time period involved.

Zorba would have been pleased.

Everything else necessary for the task served in various important ways. From the chain saws, to the barrels.

The barrels became an obvious choice for scaffolding. Lightweight and strong; emptied of their contents (honey from China) obtained from the Glory Bee Honey Company in Eugene. These were easily moved from one location to another. The barrels would rest on two 2 x 10 x 16 feet long planks, or short pieces of the same. Two other planks, side by side, would rest on the top of the barrels, anchored on the ends to the already completed part of the structure. As the elevation grew, barrels would be placed upon the planks setting on barrels, again planks placed on top of the barrels, the planks anchored at the ends. This served well as the

catwalks, approximately 19 inches wide. The anchored ends provided adequate security from any unsteadying movement. By the end of the building project, as it grew in height, the barrels were four high, three on their ends, and the last on its side, the overall height at ~ eleven feet, the ridge pole resting on that height, creating an interior peak height, above the flooring, at 12 ½ feet with a wall height at 9 ½ feet The wall height allowed the installation of a beefy cross beam (~ 16" in diameter) to be at least eight feet off the floor.

Getting too far ahead here?

Considerations for a building: One: all on one floor level, Two: a comfortable margin of height overhead, Three: mouse proof, Four: long eaves, for appearance; also to protect the sides of the structure from rain. Five: lots of windows facing the water, Six: skylights, Seven: a metal roof. The wall height became important for elevating the cross members. However this is not as important as the overall interior height which is 12

and ½ feet at the highest point. If the whole interior height had been eight feet, a standard building height (based on 4x8 gyprock) the author feels this would be too psychologically oppressive, especially with logs overhead.

Based upon the kitchen height of the log house, referred as example on the island, the author already knew of the oppressiveness of a low heavy horizontal presence. He also lived in a house with multi-levels. Many log houses (not only log houses) are open two story affairs which make them difficult to heat. All on one floor with a 12 ½ foot peak seemed a better prospect. In hindsight, a very comfortable arrangement.

Structural considerations: Dove tailed floor joists to hold the building together, on the lower level, and notched heavy central cross beams to hold the building together on the upper level, and to provide support for the purlins and ridgepoles. For appearance sake, ceiling rafters 4 ½ inches to 6 inches in diameter, x 16 ft. long, on 32 inch centers (eight to sixteen foot module) with an Alaska-milled flat, made from small trees; floor rafters, 6 to 8 inches in diameter x 20 feet, on 32 inch centers (eight to sixteen foot module), made from beach wood (to save cutting more trees); these were adzed flat by Charline to create the floor elevation and level.

The house he was caretaking for six years sounded like a bowling alley at night as the mice rolled hazel nuts on the ceiling. He did not like the smell of mice; in general, he felt Walt Disney was a screwball. He attached ¼ inch galvanized mesh to the underside of the floor joists, placing fiberglass insulation directly thereupon, from above. All perforations to the floor were surrounded by the same galvanized mesh. All joints throughout were intended to be tight enough not to admit mice.

The glass (windows) was purchased almost in advance of construction (a serious mistake as it turned out, on the one hand, and not so serious a mistake on the other, with other possible considerations in the wings, yet to be revealed. These were tempered 46” x 76” thermal panes, seconds from Pittsburg Glass (sounds Chinese these days). There were smaller ones for doors and skylights. Gable-end and bathroom thermal panes were constructed new, from double strength glass.

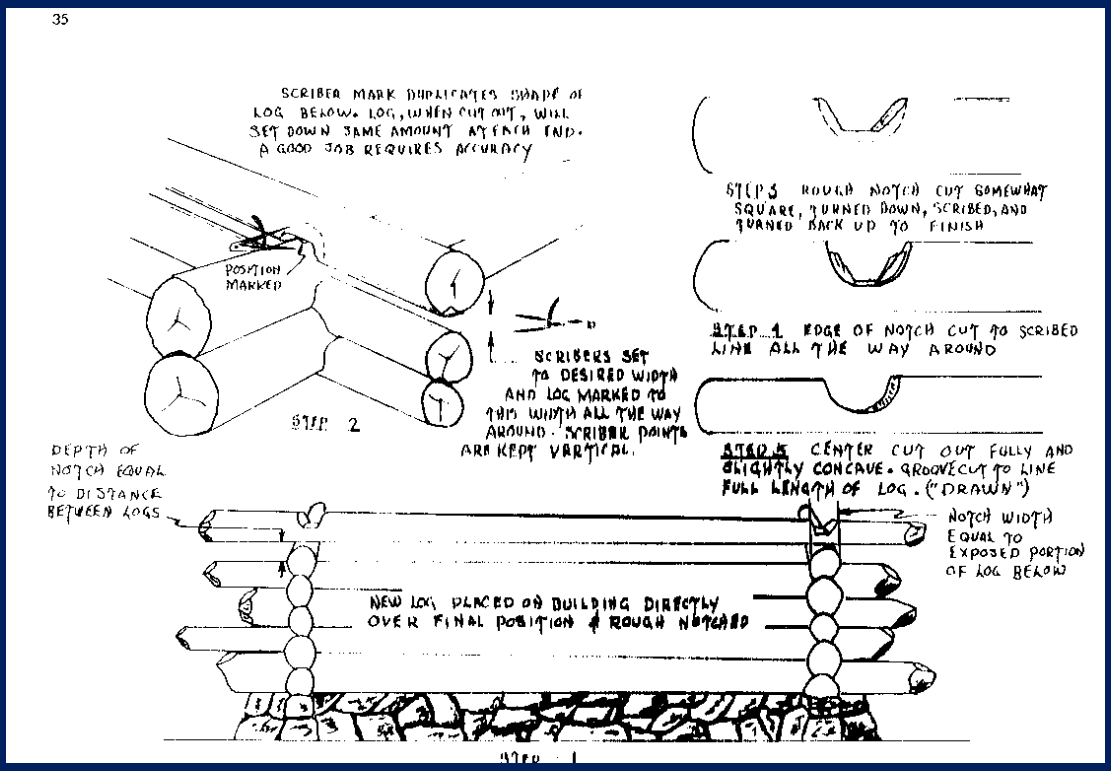
So, a mixture of forethought, winging it, and afterthought.

Tools: The chain saws were the vital shaping tools. The author had his father’s reconditioned (rebored, with a new piston and rings) McCulloch 10-10, with a 16 inch bar. He had bought previously a new Homelite XL - 123 with a 20 inch bar. After reading Allan Mackie’s books the author

decided to acquire a more powerful saw. He bought a used Husqvarna 266XP with a 30 inch bar, for which he soon acquired a 24 inch bar (the 30 inch proved too long and unwieldly). The Husky and the Mac did most of the work. The Husky was used for all but the shaping of the notch. It was used for all but two Alaska Mill operations. It was also used in the round notch to remove the bulk of the material in bread-slicing fashion to the inside of the V created by the chisel used to follow the scribe marks (this would be identified as the rough notch, created to set the height of the top log to be scribed with respect to the log beneath it [the distance approximating one inch between logs, rolled over, to settle the rough notches on top of the lower log {please refer to Mackie drawings on following page}]). The completion of a round notch required the use of an axe, and/or chisels, plus a subtle sweeping of its excavation with the saw, under control at all times. The Mac was used for this purpose, with it running barely above idle in its staccato pulsing action; the chain moving slowly, spasmodically, at its tip; with its chisel-like teeth knawing away. The idea was to shape the round notch accurately with a slight concave center (so there would not be any high places that would prevent the log from settling into the notch, and to provide some space for insulation).

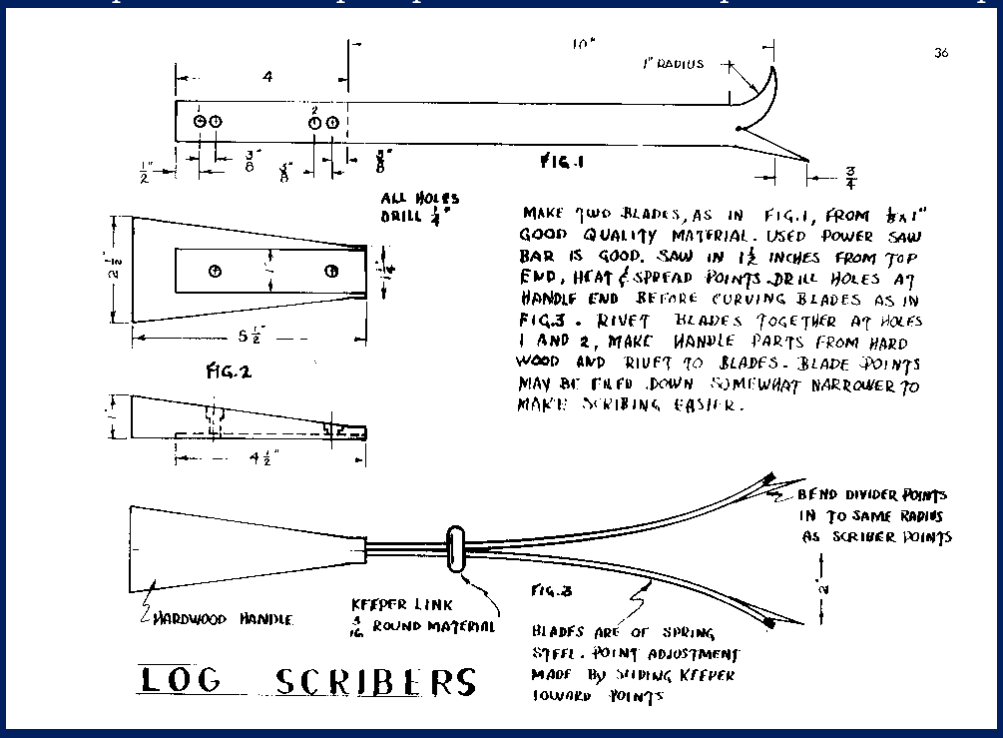
As you may deduce, the chain saw is a remarkable piece of ingenuity; without which the author would be 'hard-pressed' (an incalculable progression) to even begin such a project. Yeah! Sure there are many instances of cathedrals being built without chain saws. So what's the big deal. The real big deal is the one person in the bush doing something with a chain saw; something he had never before, or imagined he would ever be doing.

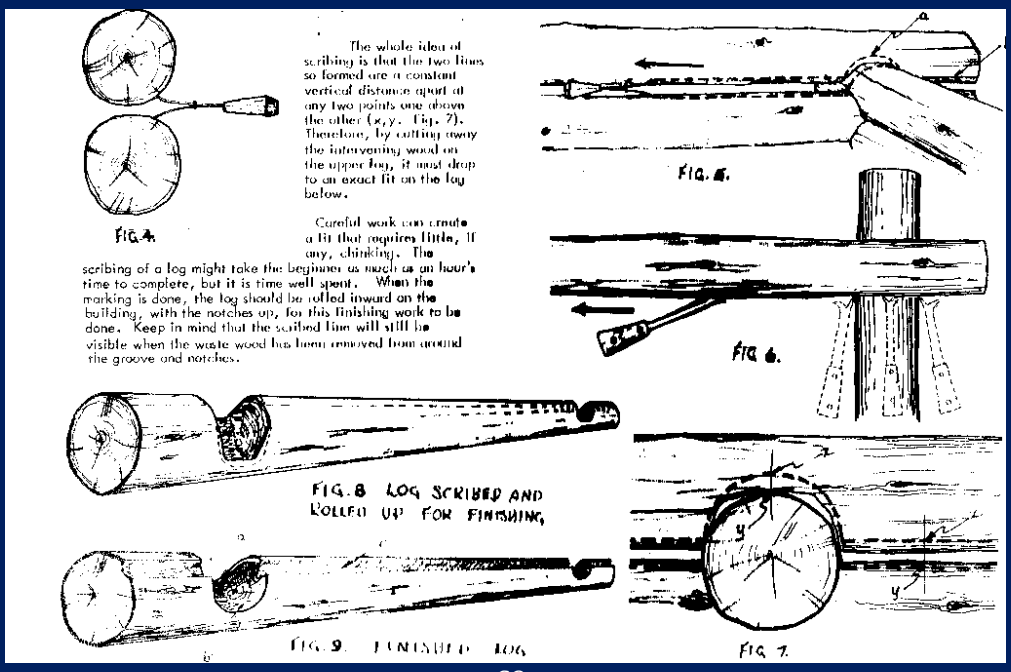
An important operation involved the 'scribing' of the logs, lengthwise and for the shaping of the round notch. This operation is described in much detail in Allan Mackie's 'Building With Logs' (1976 5th edition). In fact, the scribers the author used were ones made by the log house builder, Ian Laing, (not to omit the man's name) on the island, who had fashioned them after Mackie's design. However, for the notch itself, the author used a fancy device (compass-like in appearance) that used (preferably) an indelible pencil, equipped with a curved feeler, and bubble levels for two axes. When scribing, with either design of scriber, it was important to maintain perpendicularity (verticality) of point above point, without deviating. The levels were particularly useful for the round notches where the angle of the scribed line changed rapidly, and where control was most important. The indelible pencil lead would brighten in contact with the



moisture of the wood, making it more visible than a regular pencil, or ink, or scriber, line. Additionally, the log house builder, Ian Laing, cautioned the author regarding the attention to detail in scribing the round notch, showing him some examples of 'sloppy' scribing, and the resultant.

As Mackie shows, when scribing the length of the log, it is easy enough to keep the two points of the scriber perpendicular (vertical). It is important to have the points as sharp as possible. Sufficient pressure on the points is





achieved empirically.

In addition to scribing, the author used a V-shaped chisel to cut along the edge of the scribed line, creating a V that was approximately as wide as

the toothed edge of the chainsaw bar. This increased the visibility of the scribing and also provided a better guide for the tip of the bar as it cut along the scribe line. The initial cut along the scribe line was approximately an inch deep at an angle approximating the excavation's eventual shape. This material was removed by another cut perpendicular to the first, to remove a long V (approximately an inch or so wide) on the inside of the

scribed lines; this removal also provided more flexibility in establishing the excavation's final angle which converged in a shallow V, removing a piece of wood approximately four to six inches wide by 2 to 3 inches across the V, the full length of the log between the round notches. The eventual longitudinal notch would measure approximately six to seven inches wide by 3 inches deep. The other side (the outer side) of the notch was treated somewhat differently, by making it conform to shape of the log beneath it (rather than using the V between the notches).

The Homelite was used for two Alaska Mill cuts. It was mostly used later in the construction phase with a 'Carpenter's Bar' for shaping the pieces (notches) that would support the purlins and ridge poles. It was also used for boring (cutting through, by pushing on the tip of the bar to make holes, or starting difficult cuts.) It eventually burned up from too much high-speed notch excavation). It was rebuilt using parts (a new cylinder head, a new piston and new rings from a similar vintage Homelite, but without the compression release). It never worked as well, and fell into frustrated disuse, along with another Homelite (an XL -76 acquired from a neighbor. This saw worked well for a while before falling victim to all devices that are marginally engineered.)

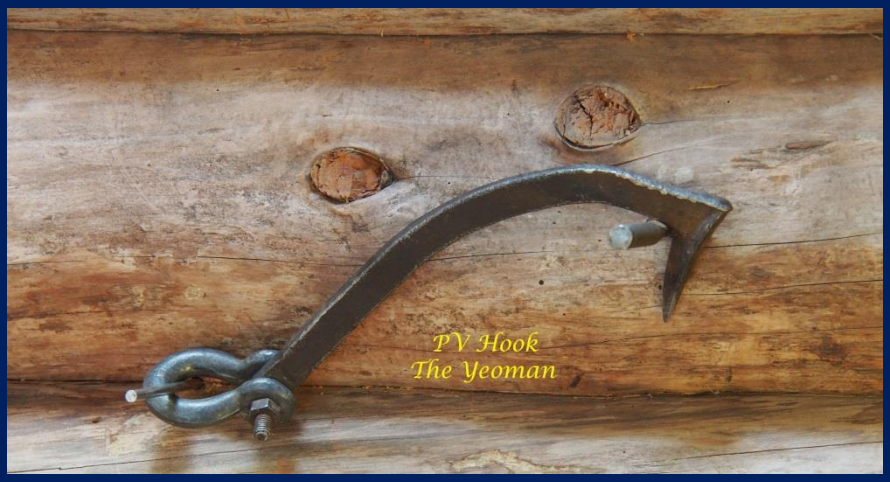
The XP266 eventually required a new carburetor, but was proving harder and harder to start (not equipped with a compression release) by a gradually enfeebled old man. It was finally given away, still operational, to a younger more fit operator. The author and his wife had done the same with their sailboat which they had operated for 39 years, once again, growing too feeble to maintain it properly.

We have covered, for the most part, the barrels and the saws.

Early on, the 'spuds' proved invaluable (revisit page 27). These were two chisel-like blades approx. 3 inches wide, 5/16 thick, pieces of truck spring, shaped with a tongue that could be buried up to the hilt in a wooden axe-like handle. They were used for peeling bark off Douglas Fir logs. The blades were sharpened at rather steep angle with the sharpened faces approx. one inch wide, with the other side flat. The corners were rounded, on one more than the other. The more rounded blade would be used for the finer work closer to the finished surface. The blade was secured into a straight handle approx. 3 feet long, with a tennis ball on the opposite end. These devices held their edge with only occasional sharpening required.

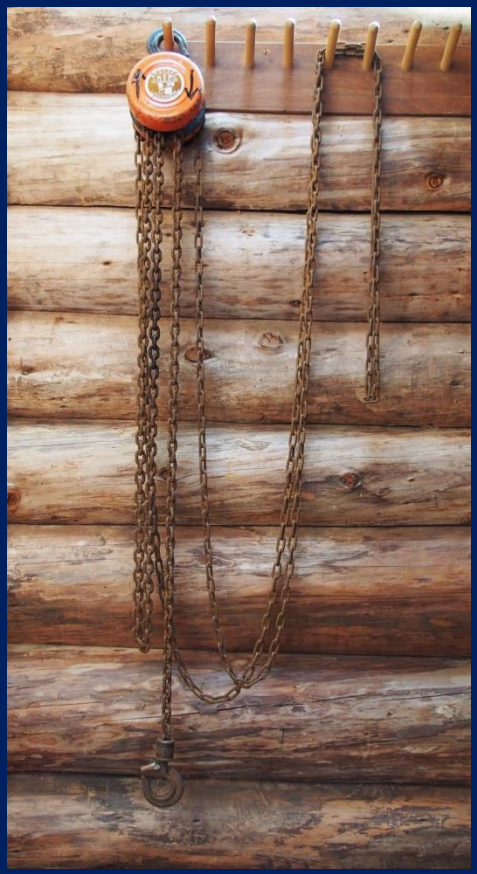
The local log house builder had provided two very awkward peeling devices fashioned from planer blades, with long handles; in the author's view it required the strength of Paul Bunyan to use these devices. They were never used by the author.

Next in utility was the adz, which Charline used to level the floor joists.



She did this, wearing her gum boots, swinging the rather short handled device by rocking the forearm of one arm on the front of her upper leg, and bouncing the edge of the cutting blade off her slightly upturned boot pg.49.

Other tools used, included three log dogs, and two pair of toothed edged contraptions intended to keep the logs from rolling while being worked on. As well, there was a second PV hook that was used, in conjunction with the chain hoist, to control the rolling of the log, particularly as it was being shaped for its final fit (a lot of up and down [rolling of the log]). Once a notch was started, and was being shaped, but incompletely fit, would require a lot of persuasion to overcome its weight as it was being rolled out of the rough, or unfinished, notch, to the round side opposite to the notch. It was almost impossible to do with a regular PV, but was relatively easily accomplished with the hook, driven into the log at a strategic point, and attached to the chain hoist. This operation did require some deft handling of the log as it reached the apex of its roll, usually achieved by catching the log with the regular PV, and allowing it to slowly roll to a controlled null (stasis) on its round part. The procedure was reversed in rolling the log back onto its notch (after some correction work was done on the log [often a high spot being found on some other part of the log; requiring more excavation]). A controlled roll back was a better procedure than allowing the log to freely roll into its notch, with a rather loud uncontrolled thock.



Log dogs, fashioned in Eugene from one inch re-bar, with machined points, and bent at 90 degrees on each end, served well to keep difficult logs from observing the

persuasions of gravity, sometimes used in conjunction with the other toothed contraptions.

The Broad Axe, a very fine tool, did not receive any use at all. For one thing, it was very heavy. Another device, larger than a hatchet, with a hatchet handle, with a broad blade, and a flat face, was more useful. The froe, cum mallet, went unused on the building proper. A second adz was seldom used. A draw knife was used in the

finishing touches of the floor joists. A pair of PV hooks attached to a shaped wooden, double-ended handle, a two-person thingie, designed for lifting logs, went unused as designed, but was employed in pulling some pieces with a hook driven in opposite sides, and pulled in the middle (sans handle). A four inch chisel went unused for the most part. A two inch auger went unused, as did a couple of heavy two inch gouges. The smaller gouges in

the author's sculptor's kit were most useful in shaping the ends of all the logs to fit snugly without gaps, and to remove minor bulges that were missed by the chain saw excavations.

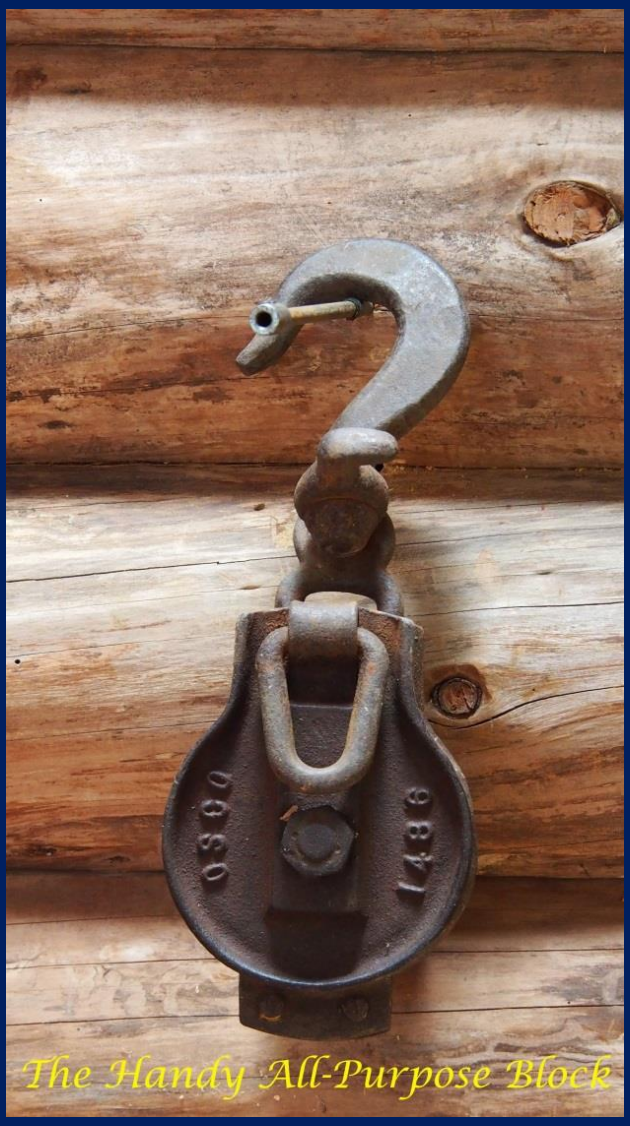

'Snatching' Hook

One other light tool, a sharp pointed metal tooth about six inches long, attached at a right angle to a short lightweight handle, was useful in snagging any wooden object.

One metal block, in particular, was used to move logs, by attaching it to a tree with a piece of chain, and pulling rope reeved through the block attached to the log with a piece of chain and the other end to the tractor.

Most blocks were used in operating the gin pole.

As the building grew, more chain, and chain binders were put into use to keep the logs firmly in place when not actually being worked on. This was a technique the author learned from a log house builder in Eugene/Springfield area. By the end of the construction, there were eleven such installations employed.



The Handy All-Purpose Block

Chain, Chain Binders, Come Alongs (Mini-Mules), [Shown] represebt only part of the total. Some chain and binders were borrowed. In total 11 Chain Binders were used in securing the walls. Of course, as the walls grew in height, more chain was required. When extra wall securing was needed, Come Alongs served in conjunction with chain. Even the large Boom Chain was used on a wall.

A note regarding the glass (if you will remember, purchased early in the game). These were thermal tempered glass. There were 16 at 46” x 76” x approx. 5/8 inch thick; and several at 28” x 67” x approx. ½ inch thick. The larger panes were stored in crates holding four units each; the smaller panes were stored in crates holding six each. In the crates the panes were separated by small pieces of cork approximately 3/4 “ x 3/4” x 3/32 inch thick, randomly placed on one side of the panes, by the manufacturer. The crates were stored upright, off the ground under tarps.

When it came time to install the windows (some five years later), a startling discovery was made. One side of each of the panes was clouded on the outside. The glass had become etched by some yet unexplained process. The etching was not removable by any available cleaners, from tri-phosphate to phosphoric acid. The author didn’t try more corrosive acids like HCL or H_2SO_4.

In contacting Pittsburg Glass, they recommended polishing with pumice and/or jeweler’s rouge, loaded on a pad attached to, and driven by, an orbital sander. This operation did clear the surface of the glass, but required approx. 8 hours per window.

Still a mystery; some hypothesized that gaseous fluoric acid from the planet seeped into the crates. But why only one side of the panes? It was as though the stacked panes acted as some kind of battery (the panes as plates, and water vapor as the electrolyte – this would mean that some

material was removed from the one plate and deposited on the other; is that possible; or is it more likely that the vaporous or gaseous element simply dissolved or 'etched' part of the surface? Only on one side???)

Beginnings:

The story that will unfold has already been told; that is, the project was started in 1989, the project more or less finished in 1996, and the author and his wife have been living in the end result ever since. A wing was added in 2003. A shop, and a couple of wood sheds have been built in between times; a water shed has been built with a concrete slab installed to support a 1350 gallon tank filled with water. A greenhouse was built in 2000. A garden was started in 2000, and a garden shed built in 2002. Additionally they have acquired a water license from the Crown some 2500 feet away with water piped on a surface line to a Tee, which provides water to the garden, and to a water tank that provides water to the greenhouse. Part of this water works uses some shared piping from a well which is pumped to the water shed where the 1350 gallon tank is housed, and have run a 300 foot buried water line to the house from the water shed. While awaiting the water license (which took nine years to obtain) they took advantage of a well drilling company's visit to the rock to have a well drilled on the property, from which they regularly pump water to the water shed. At first, while living in the trailer, they used the (eventual) water license water because it came from an underground source, which they had covered, but it was a small hand excavation that could not supply all our needs, especially when the garden was developed, requiring an enlargement (after obtaining a license) with an excavator. They could no longer cover it, without an elaborate structure, so they started using the well water which needed to be treated; and still needs to treated, for its high alkalinity (ph 10). It will be noted an uncovered water source gathers all kinds of vegetation, as well as animal deposits. This generally results in water that will not pass water quality tests. The well water passes water quality tests, but contains sulfates, iron and boron, but no fecal matter. In 2013, we commissioned an excavator to dig a pond in the same general deposit from which they had created the garden, in a pocket of clay. During the winter, the overflow from this area is used to drive a small water turbine.

They have installed solar power and wind power, with ancillary batteries and controllers.

The project was begun when the author was 56. Since then, he has required two lumbar laminectomies, one open heart surgery to have an artificial aortic valve installed along with a mammary bypass. He has had radiation for prostate cancer, surgery for a double inguinal hernia, and emergency surgery for an intestinal blockage. Until 2015 he managed to keep his woodsheds full. But, like all creatures, engendered on this planet, the catabolic processes have caught up with the author; he skipped filling the woodshed in 2015, and is faced with a woodpile (a stack of logs) and gradually emptying woodsheds, at 83. He has endured the vagaries of gout, which the cessation of alcohol consumption, at 80, seemed to alleviate. His body is an accumulation of almost constant aches and pains, easily aggravated with physical activity. He has resorted to the use of pain killers to better enable him to get some relief, and a decent sleep occasionally. The pain killers work only marginally, at the cost of hallucinations, and hangovers; and create ever larger dependency dosages to be effective.

Not to enlarge upon what might becoming apparent, he has also had to maintain his legal home (of 53 years) in Oregon, to keep the insurance companies at bay, and to provide a forced tranquil living space that cannot begin to compare to the same equanimity, as attained on the rock.

None of this is being written to illustrate the stupidity of labor, or the end result of labor, but to pass on the true requisite matter attendant to bleary-eyed dreams, and what is required of an individual to accomplish them. It doesn't end there. One also needs to further adjure his naïve sensibilities to account crossing international borders without attention to detail. It has nothing to do with terrorism, drugs, or money laundering; it has to do with bureaucracies that are trained to function in a certain manner. A person is not a person; that is, the bureaucrat is not a person, and the person with whom he is forced to interact, becomes a non-person, by definition. Caveat Emptor.

Some of this has something to do with building a log house in the bush; and some of it has absolutely nothing to do with building a log house in the bush. Fortunately the building phase of the project was not encumbered by border 'altercations'. It has only been recently that the border thing became a problem. The border bureaucrats did not like the amount of time the author was spending (only time, not moola) in their country. It became a contentious issue, wherein, after an 8 hour drive, the author was detained for three hours, asked to write a precis describing his intentions with regard to CANADA; then denied entry. It was recommended that he seek a representative, in this case a Canadian immigration attorney, who turned

out to be a laughable entity, who took money under false pretenses, was incompetent, and completely indifferent to his client. At this writing it is still a hassle, with varying degrees of stress associated with the border agents. From the 'representative' he obtained a signature on a Use Of Representative form that showed he was indeed a 'representative'. His advice to the author was to sell the property, (and 'go home'??). The author did request of the attorney some way to make it possible for an 83 year old to enjoy the amenities, using his expertise to find a way to make it possible.

The 83 year author proclaims for all to read that he is not a money launderer, a drug dealer, a terrorist; and, he is without a criminal record. He likes being by the water, as he is fading off into the sunset; he spends his wife's hard-earned moola wherever he is, on whichever side of the border. He takes nothing from nobody; and he contributes his winsome personality to the ambience wherever he is.

More germane to the subject, although of less interest to just about everybody, simply because of the civilized's hang-ups in the area of human waste, is the issue of a septic system. Although it is perfectly honorable to use other means than a flush toilet, these days, some people simply prefer not to.

As a youngster, all through his high school years, and two years previous, the author thought of an outhouse simply as part of life, if he thought of it at all. The outhouse was part of the woodshed; and was designed to be emptied periodically to be composted (buried in the ground, allowed to ferment, decompose and become humus). At least that is how the author understood it. In the cold winter nights, with the ground frozen, covered with ice and snow, by gum golly, it was a speedy affair with bare feet, to take a leak. The author tried the out-the-window stunt until it was discovered, then something literally hit the fan.

On Lasqueti, living in the trailer for nine years, we used an outhouse, located not too far away, in the woods, overlooking the water.

There was some kind of rumor going around that the Regional District had somehow become interested in septic systems, drain fields etc., and was about to enforce some kind of control; bureaucrats tend to worry about such matter(s); the author takes his hat offal to them. It was also rumored that existing septic systems would be grandfathered in; blah blah blah.

Being affected by rumors, the author decided to become a grandfather (although his and his wife's grandparents were long gone) if the issue ever arose, so he got busy burying an affair constructed of 2 x 6 cedar, configured as a 4 x 4 x 8 foot rectangular box, using all the proper heights of entry and exit, with dividers, a removable top; and establishing a drain field. He did this before he began any log work. It was a bit of challenge because, in excavating a hole to locate the thing, one to two feet down, he encountered Lasqueti conglomerate. He needed to chisel at least two feet of the depth to make it deep enough to accommodate the planned angle of the discharge piping from the throne, and have the part leaving the proposed house, also buried. If you feel this description shows some equanimity of conforming, you don't know the half of it. Somehow it has worked out; eventually expecting the day when it will all collapse from decay and rot. Then someone will say: "I told you so." In the meantime, it has been a luxurious adventure into matters rather left to others.

This log house thing might be considered a large outdoor sculpture. 'It is not the first, or will it be the last', to coin an old expression.

The log house thing means nothing by itself. Humans build nests; perches, lairs, hidey-holes; a shelter. They also create studios, garrets, museums, cathedrals. Some live in tents on the commons or even in cardboard boxes; and in condos on Park Avenue.

But the subject of this speculative rant is a one-off; not so much as a one of a kind, as a solitary, doing something that may or may not make any sense.

None of this 'grandiose' endeavor could have transpired without Charline. In some ways she is the author's reason to be. If life is to be construed the pursuit of happiness, then the happiness that entered the author's life through her, provides a rationale for being. Is it foregone that one needs a rationale?

The thing stands on its own merits. It is not permanent. The author is not permanent. The species is not permanent. Even Abe's, though lovingly cared for, may not outlast his historical significance.

Does the author stand on his own merits, amidst all his borrowings (non-intentional plagiarisms)?

Each of us intellectualizes; that is, ruminates, chews his cud. The cud comes to us from our browsing, our conscious and unconscious search for

understanding, meaning, and yes!, purpose (which the author so often mocks as a presumptuous claim).

We are often exposed to the slim hopeful prospect, when someone asks about the Lessons Of History. Some do not even ask; they speculate; they divine, they tell it like it is; or, so they intimate.

This author is not pursing some historical imperative.

Receiving and accepting a challenge may seem to provide a plausible explanation for doing, doing anything.

Each of these sentences wants to make a claim unto itself, that is, reveal a self-evident thing. As do all attempts at truth saying.

While the author does whatever it is he is doing, building a log house or a shit house, or listening to the pap of the fourth estate (where doth a lot of the fecal matter transpire) he is ruminating, (even presumptuously distilling [getting rid of the impurities]), sometimes out of habit, sometimes out of a persistent nagging thing going on in his brain. He is aware of the transience in which he is obliged to live; he is aware of the historical perspective (the abundance of ready-made platitudes intended to guide a human life through the perils it must face.) The platitudes often become plausible deceptions, rather than the rocks from which he may construct a newer Tower. The log house is so incidental to these thoughts. Many of them persist within the temple; they cling to its structure because they were ever present during its making.

It all comes down to (eventuates in) reposing in the Laz-Y-Boy, with eyes open, staring out, bleary-eyed, over the ocean, with water nymphs, from the depths, swimming, gliding, and waving. That's luxury. And hope. Is that not more charming than confronting the cold, insouciant. uninhabitable wet (reality), that covers three quarters of the globe?

As you read along, the author will in some obvious way, direct you to his websites, or rather, his scribbles, wherein he pretends to search for truth, truths; secrets of the universe; secrets of life. Not to be found in the Lessons of History. Perhaps not to be found anywhere.

NEWS!!!!!

There is another dimension to this whole undertaking that may not be relevant; that may belong in some other place.

As indicated, the author began his adventure in the bush at age 56. He did not feel old; he felt energetic enough to do the thing; or at least have a go at it. Even after two back surgeries and one heart surgery, and one radiation, while so engaged, he returned to the task. This fits the description of one obdurate animal, an ox.

There are many things we do that we reflect upon, with some misgivings; that is, we say something like, 'if I had it to do over again, I would', what, 'do it the same way', or 'I would do it differently'; or 'I might not do it all'?

If one wasn't doing one thing, he might be doing another (Bill Gates keeps flashing this computer with the admonition to upgrade to Windows 10). (The author bought a loaf of bread; on the wrapper of the loaf there was printed all kinds of reminders that one needed to eat the Pain, and get out there and buy another loaf.) Fuck consumerism! As the author has been saying all along: "Yesterday is irrelevant!".

At this late date, the author reflects differently upon the whole process of doing, in this case, perhaps the building of a log house. The type of house seems irrelevant because there is little he can do with his body at age 83. He wanders around the house feeling like somebody else made the thing, and maybe that somebody else should be living there. He neither marvels at, or appreciates the effort that went into its making, because it is part of a past that is gone, even though he occupies what once was. So, most of this writing is about the past. The author doesn't know what can be said about that fact.

Yet he knows it was no ordinary undertaking. It was not a Lincoln Log House. He imagines Abe in the house he built, wondering what Abe would say about it all. ("If it wasn't for the honor of the thing, I could just as soon live in my old shack"). Abe's place was a throw-up against the elements. It has survived because Abe became a famous man. If he had not been, like many other such structures, his little domicile would have rotted away through neglect, perhaps starting with the roof, then the rest would follow. The author is not a famous man. Abe's living in a log cabin is supposed to symbolize something, maybe, humble origins, a great man getting his beginning in simple unpretentious circumstances. Did Abe help to build it; probably not. The author is not being too humble with his efforts; he's triumphant when he solves a problem without the Lord's or anybody else's help.

Yes, it is a place to be, but the author is not free to occupy it at will, because it is in another country. Another country is a place that has rules

about foreigners. Foreigners are not allowed to spend more than an allotted amount of time in any given year. Its gotten to be hard and fast.

The author followed all the rules and recommendations of those who guard the gates, but got nowhere. Nowhere was couched in a language that only a bureaucrat can create and decipher. In plain language the only word that mattered was 'denial', signed by the Consul. Because there was no collateral discussed, it was never learned how much was needed to buy your way in. As the saying goes everybody has his price. But the older the author gets, and the more remote all possibilities seem, and/or seem to matter, he gets more careless with his condemnations.

Who's In, Who's Out, Who Wins, Who Loses? Will uttered a mouthful.

One would think that, if Europe can have open borders, and a common currency, the USA and Canada could as well; but they do not. There is no reasonable explanation to justify this state of affairs.

There are no restrictions on the amount of wherewithal a citizen of the US can spend in Canada. When things are tight (i.e.) the currency difference is too great, there is a limitation on the amount a US citizen may bring into Canada, that is, as an investment, banking the gains until par is regained.

Banks will take a percentage of any conversion. Go figure.

Border Services will use the highest exchange rate to compute a tax on goods brought into Canada. Go figure.

Banks and Border Services are highly motivated to get as much as they can. They got you by the short hairs. Even VISA charges a percentage when one uses his card OUTSIDE (to pay Revenue Canada at the border crossing).

This rant is even more irrelevant than meditating upon ones feelings as he tries to understand what it is he has done in the bush in a foreign country. Or what he has done with his life in any case, where being in a foreign country becomes irrelevant.

The age thing may be a saving grace, since one can do nothing, he does nothing; that is, if something seems fucked up, there is nothing he can do to correct it, or to fuck it up even more (the latter, a hidden blessing).

His argument with himself, even with others, when they wondered about what it is he thought he was doing, was to say, he just wanted to finish, and cock his feet up for ten minutes. Well, Yeah! Some goal. He has cocked his feet up for much longer periods, somehow feeling guilty for not doing something that needed doing. Are we not supposed to enjoy life? Why

must we always be doing something? Does doing something really help us to enjoy life more than just cocking ones feet up? Well, there is a qualitative element here. One could cock his feet up in jail cell. Cocking one's feet up by the unobtruded (no bars) seashore is different of course, and answers the clarion call to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. So where's the problem? Some speculate: 'its the Protestant ethic'. At the same time they tell us that all work and no play makes of Jack a very dull boy. Is that why the author is so dull?

The guy at the border is just doing his job, just like the people who are trying to hang Hillary, the incorrigible e-mailer. How would you like to have that stain on your underwear? Being an American entering Canada is like having a stain on your underwear. Terrorist, Money Launderer, Drug Trafficker/Dealer, Incorrigible enjoyer of Life Liberty and The Pursuit. Imagine them checking every entrant into Canada to learn if they had a crinimal record. They did it to the author, and were obviously disappointed in finding he didn't have one; they had to deny his entry for some other 'plausible' reason; like he overspent his welcome; he stayed too long and spent too much money on GST and PST.

The log house has become like any other house; not a shack exactly, but a dishonored place with the clutter of human lives. Mostly the author's clutter, much to his spouse's chagrin.

The house received the designation of 'temple' last year (2015) when a pair of violet-green swallows decided to nest on a projecting purlin under the western eave. They sure were busy little farts. They would fly out to the bluff to gather some duff, they would try to stuff the duff into nifty tidy little cocoon, only the stuff had no stickum; so they got some mud somewhere to act as stickum, but most of what they did, seemed to follow all the persuasions of gravity, landing, scattered on a plank walkway below. There seemed to be enough duff stuff on the plank to make another nest or two. At last they seemed satisfied, or the eggs were pressing for a home, so they settled in.

This year they didn't come back; or they did come back to fly over the bluff where they found the duff, but sojourned to yet other climes. Even so, the uppity little farts could not escape the fact the earth is spinning 1000 mph on its axis and is revolving around the sun at ~ 70,000 mph. Their falling duff of the previous year fell to the plank below at 32ft/sec/sec.

We have been detempled. The log house has become a has been. Soon its chief engineer will become a has been. Abe saved the union, and freed the slaves; what more could you ask? They saved his infant domicile.

An Islander; that is, a Lasqueti Islander, asked the author if he, an old machinist with a lathe and a milling machine, would do some machine work for him? Yup! He was pretty confident in asking. The author worked on the cheap, since he was not allowed to 'make' any moola in the foreign country. That's OK; he got some gravel for his driveway, and he did the ole good Samaritan thing we all seem inclined to do at various times, however inconsistently, in our lives.

So the Islander comes, and the author asks him if he knows anybody on the Island that would like to do machine work. Nope! Then he tells the author that they had indicted Hillary for e-mail infractions. Yeah! he knew they were saving that one; like they do all the dirty underwear (usually it's the pot calling the kettle black; that is, dark bum). Man just loves dirty underwear; its what he can do with it to generate appearances. Imagine Hillary with Dirty underwear. Its not that every asshole doesn't have the smell of something like shit clinging to it, even Rush Limbah. There you go; a great revelation. Some people's underwear is so dirty that its considered unpatriotic; as they say, 'Get a load of that'.

What has any of this to do with log-house building? Well, nothing really; but the author is trying to get the story out there; all these nuances fuck-up the concentration, because 'fairness, equity, and justice' are always being thrust into the open, as a clear indication that trying to live a decent life is impossible; that there is no reason whatever for living a decent life within the norms of human activity, because they are waiting to pounce on you, just to show you that you aint decent. If you happen to be chief officer of the State Department, and some foreign country into which your government has entered without invitation, and they happen to catch you good with a bomb, it's the fault of the Chief Officer of the State Department. That was another smelly underwear job. Was it negligence? Hey! Everybody is negligent, just like everybody has an asshole. Saint Teresa had an asshole. No, it was not negligence, anymore than those assholes at the helm, under W., were negligent; they were just plain ignerent. CondoLisa was in the washroom fixing her coiffure when World Trade took a hit. Peorgy was in a classroom promoting the three R's; he sure had a silly book on his face when they told him CondoLisa was in the washroom fixing her coiffure when Trade went to hell. That got him

worried, an' he took flight, jus' like he did when he was in the NatGard. Air Farce One.

So when something as irrelevant as dirty underwear catches you unaware (different word), you think about things like abdication as a citizen. How can a person be a citizen of country that sponsors the asshole smeller as a first line of offense? Tell the author, how it is possible?

By he way, the author apologizes for logging the outburst.

The author 'promises' to hew the line more carefully,meaningfully, and succinctly, in the future.