



INSPIRATION REPORT

FALL 2021
ISSUE 30

Featured Project

A BEAUTIFUL TIMBER FRAME HOME THAT JUST GETS BETTER WITH TIME

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We Have a New Book!

CHECK OUT HOW YOU CAN GET A **FREE** AUTOGRAPHED HARDCOVER EDITION

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Essential Knowledge

EARTHQUAKE RESISTANT BUILDING & HOW TO MANAGE DIFFERING VIEWPOINTS

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3 UNIQUE APPROACHES

TO PERFECT TIMBER FRAME FLOOR PLANS

WHICH IS RIGHT FOR YOU?



Words by
BERT SARKKINEN

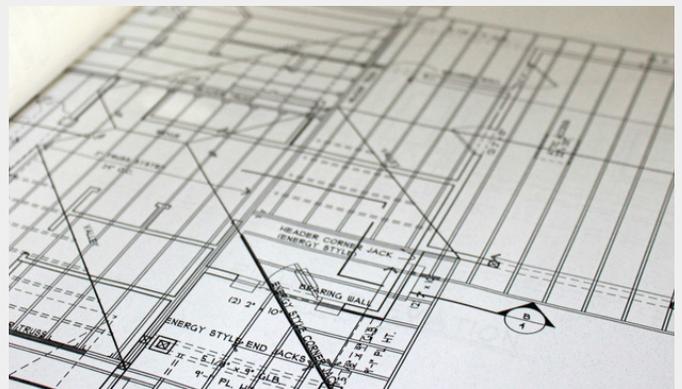
3 Unique Approaches to Perfect Timber Frame Floor Plan

Why are floor plans so “sticky?” By that, I mean, “Why do so many conversations about building and remodeling begin with floor plans?” I have my ideas I can share with you, but for now, let’s look at three distinct approaches you can use to get your ideal timber frame floor plan. Before I present you with these approaches, here are some considerations to think about.

Answer YES, NO, or NEUTRAL to the following statements.

- I need to complete my floor plan fast.
- I quickly become lost when doing research and planning.
- I do not enjoy working through pros and cons.
- I prefer quick decisions and high-level planning.
- Time is more important to me than money.
- Spare me the details! I prefer shortcuts.

Where did you find your thoughts? Did you generally agree with the above statements? Disagree? Or maybe mixed results? One thing to keep in mind with all of these approaches is that: **“All roads lead to Rome...”** Provided people do not abandon the planning process prematurely! I have seen people of all different stripes successfully use these approaches to get their ideal timber frame floor plan. It doesn’t seem to matter how or where people start. Or how many twists and turns their planning path takes.



People end up with bad investments and are unhappy when they get impatient and short-circuit the process before "reaching Rome." That being said, there are methods you will find more effective and more enjoyable for how you roll. As with any complex endeavors, articulating why something is important and clearly understanding what we want can be tough to sort out in our mind... Choosing the right approach will help you navigate choices and trade-offs to successfully "reach Rome"- without losing hair or developing deep haggard stress lines in your face. That is what this article is all about.

If you found yourself leaning YES to these statements, I recommend choosing the "Throw Money at the Planning Wall" approach. If you find yourself leaning towards NO for most of these statements, the more labor-intensive "I'll Do the Homework in Advance" approach is for you. Finally, if you wound up in the NEUTRAL or MIXED zone, I suggest the "Walk -n- Talk" approach. Of course, each pathway has distinct advantages and disadvantages, some more obvious than others. Let's go through them one at a time.

Throw Money at the Planning Wall

This choice can be painful and problematic if you:

1. Don't have extra resources. ("DUH.")
2. Are not OK with "wasted" planning.
3. Are married to someone extremely cost-conscious. (Which, sadly enough, is the same as not having extra resources! Isn't it a tragic thing to be so loaded, yet practically a beggar in practice?)

You are probably thinking...
"Well, thank you, Captain Obvious! I don't think I could have worked that out myself!"

But before you laugh me off these pages, let me make a couple of points about being OK with "waste." I put "waste" in parenthesis because the "waste" in question should simply be viewed as part of the discovery and design process, with professionals serving as your guide. It is not uncommon for well-heeled clients to use two or three designers before sorting out what they really want.



Point #1

Adopting this approach, you will not have the frustration of doing tons of research or working to articulate exactly **WHAT** you want and **WHY**. A good professional designer can get inside your head and eliminate a ton of decisions for you - this is a beautiful thing with very little waste or frustration when it works. On the other hand, I have seen designers get thrown under the bus simply because people have had too many conflicting desires to overcome indecision and "moving target" syndrome even with the help of competent professionals.

Point #2

In general, I assume that we as people do not know **WHY** we act or **WHAT** we want. We tend to start doing things before our brain really becomes engaged. That goes for me as well. I believe that is why so many designers get "sacrificed" to the discovery process. If designers and clients alike had the patience of Job, most would eventually find their way to "Rome." But most lack unlimited patience. When the lost time, waste, and frustration of missed communication climbs too high, it can often lead to a parting of ways between clients and professionals. Sometimes this tension truly stems from a



mismatch where a designer doesn't "get" the client's desired outcome. Either way, strained relationships often make termination a preferable choice to struggling forward with emotional baggage.

Point #3

This approach can be swift because things "click" with your designer or agonizingly slow because contract termination usually doesn't happen until the designer has become less and less responsive over time. If you choose this method, identify red flags and turnaround points just like mountaineers do before starting their climb. It is by far the easiest way to start. If you want to hedge your bets against losing time and cast a wide idea net right from the start, hire three separate designers simultaneously!

I'll Do the Homework in Advance

Rare is the person or a couple that can execute this plan to its fullest. But if you enjoy researching and, dare I say, soul-searching on your own, you can make life easy for your designer. This means you know **WHAT** you want and **WHY** you want it. You may even know **HOW** you want to get it. At this point, you will have decided on an investment amount, have property tied up, and have scoured the Internet for floor plans noting what you like and dislike. You will also have collected inspiration photos and made initial selections for appliances, cabinets, flooring, colors, and lighting.

You will have found building design questions from the Internet and dutifully answered every last one of them thoroughly! You have a good idea about the square



footage of the house you want to build and a rough idea of what it should take money-wise to build it.

In addition, **you will have read chapters 1-5 from 'The Art of Hybrid Timber Framing'** and be able to describe what you are trying to achieve in 4 to 7 words. You are also able to identify both red and green flags to look for when hiring professionals. If you are this person, I would be surprised if you did not have a three-ring binder or some sort of a laptop, tablet, or electronic organizing device. That is a job well done!

But now a word of caution! As they say, **"No good deed goes unpunished."** If you do not tone down the presentation of all the research you have done, you could get punished for being so organized and educated. Your builder and designer could be scared off thinking to themselves: "Yowsers! If I make one little mistake with these people, my arse could be grarse!" (or something to that effect.) So remain a little flexible and avoid overwhelming your designer when you communicate what you are trying to achieve.

Walk -n- Talk

The walking here refers to **resource to research**. The old Yellow Pages tag line, "Let your fingers do the walking," now applies to gathering info on the Internet. (On a side note, I'm glad they finally made phone book delivery opt-in instead of opt-out. It used to be that every six months, another block of wasted paper would show up at our doorstep!)

The talking, in this case, means **reaching out to professionals** for initial consultations to complement or even help you understand the research you have done. Many times you will get pointed towards specific items to study and make decisions on. As you might have guessed, most people find themselves somewhere in this category where they do some research, interview different designers, and then invest money to capture everything they are trying to achieve with their timber frame floor plan design.



This mix of blending homework with professional expertise is quite flexible, as you can throw more money at it to speed things up and reduce hassle. Or you can take things slower and do more of the heavy lifting yourself. If you play your cards right, you can get hours of free consultation by interviewing a gazillion different designers. (I don't recommend it.)

However, overplaying your hand this way can cost you in a couple of ways..

Point #1

Your intent could leak through, and **you could turn off designers** who could prove to be the best investment for what you want to accomplish.

Point #2

Your time and well-being are worth something. Information covered in initial consultations will vary, but they will generally cover the same ground and only take you so far. Also, talking with too many service providers can cause decision angst and paralysis by analysis! To get traction in dealing with trade-offs, wish list priorities, and decisions, I recommend choosing a professional and placing a little cashola in the handola! The heavy lifting required to move from the abstract to tangible building documents usually starts in earnest once an initial investment is made. **The biggest thing I see people struggle with at this stage is the fear of investing money to design something they don't like or can't build for some reason.** Once people realize that finding out what they don't like or can't build is also valuable, they tend to relax and get in the flow with the process of discovery.



Where Are You Now?

What kind of thoughts or feelings are you left with after reading about these three different approaches? Perhaps it was as clear as mud, which left you irritated for the time you spent reading this article? Or perhaps you gained insight that will help you move forward in some way? As I write this, I can't help but think about **how handy it would be to have a magic wand you could simply wave about to understand your deeper desires, needs, and motivations** behind your desire to build. Then, with that knowledge securely locked down, you could easily make the most logical decisions, be right 99% of the time, and have smooth sailing to reach your goal...

But that would also be a story without a struggle, no danger, no villain, and no suspense. It would be a boring, predetermined outcome, devoid of challenge or surprise. A little bit like Superman as the perfect hero.

So getting back to our shared conundrum about how to move forward getting you the ideal timber frame floor plans you want... **Might I suggest acceptance, awareness, and adventure?** If I can accept who I am (warts and all) and the cards life has dealt me- a big load of pain, fear, and insecurity is eliminated. (While fear, pain, and loss will never become our cuddly friends, we can accept them, stop struggling to avoid them, and create more room for appreciation) If I can sharpen my awareness to act in accordance with my core values, I can better use wisdom and patience in



making decisions. And I believe this will lead to a sense of anticipation and adventure. **Now let's end with a question to get your subconscious mind working for you-** "How might this Triple AAA mindset of, **A**wareness, **A**ceptance, and **A**dventure, help you?"

On behalf of the ATF team,

Bert Sarkkinen



Patience Pays Off Over Time!

It has been fun to watch Steve and Angie's project evolve. In the beginning, it was more or less the same as most projects. Timber design went back-and-forth before eventually finding its balanced sweet spot. But then things began to get interesting. Angie kept picking at idea threads - some ideas were rejected, others bore fruit.

Granted, this wasn't always easy for us as service providers. For example, at one point, Angie claimed the winning title for top email communications with Josh! But as 'working for the long-term good' is one of our core values, we stayed true to the process, sharing our creativity and advice.

The project turned out very nice when it was complete... But are things ever complete? Definitely not in this case! True





to form, Angie kept picking at idea threads long after the general contractor had packed up his tools and left. After 3 or 4 years, I came back to discuss adding some more beams to the master bedroom and was amazed! Angie and Steve had continued to polish the look and feel of their home. Accent walls with old reclaimed whitewashed wood had been added, along with wainscot and a sliding barn door. I noticed the old hand-hewn mantle and furniture pieces. Unique light fixtures had replaced some of the original fixtures. So, many little tweaks after initial construction brought out a resonant vibe reflecting Angie and Steve.

Now, you may be wondering why they want to sell their home after things are so dialed in? To that, I say: Many things in life cause change. But I wonder if this decision has anything to do with the 'Happiness is' thoughts from our 2018 Spring Inspiration Report? It speaks to a sense of anticipation, how we crave it and how our minds go on the hunt for more as one experience or project finishes up... Hmmm?





GETTING TO KNOW...

NOLAN BRADETICH

Nolan was introduced to the welding and mechanic world by his uncle... when he was just eight years old! Learning things at such a young age gives a tremendous advantage. The brain wiring done in a young mind create what most of us define as a natural talent. Nolan gets to live and work with this virtuous cycle where he enjoys his work- which means he gives it more time and energy- which means his skills thinking, and problem solving abilities grow- which means he experiences more and more success- which means he enjoys his work- and so forth!! But this hasn't made Nolan afraid of failure, unwilling to help out in new capacities if needed. That is what I call living the ATF core value of help first!

What would you like people to know about your past?

My immediate and extended family are very close to me because we grew up in poverty. We never knew where the next meal might come from, and sometimes we moved from house to house to eat meals depending on who had the food. Because of that, we work around conflict to stay close.

Where is a place you would like to visit?

I would like to visit Alaska with no particular plan or itinerary. Just kind of explore and take myself on a tour.

How do you like to spend your free time?

I spend a lot of my free time outdoors, especially since my daughter loves to fish and swim.

What would have to happen in the next 3 years to make you feel like you are moving forward?

In the next three years, I would like to have three things done. It would be nice to have one more child, have our home remodel finished, and have our motor home remodel finished.

MEMORY LANE

I remember long bumpy bus rides during grade school. My siblings and I were the first people on the bus in the morning and the last people off in the afternoon. Luckily I don't have trouble with motion sickness. Most of the time, you would have found me slid down in my seat, reading a book with my knees braced against the seat in front of me. I could also tune out noise and

distraction. One day a girl named Michelle from an older grade got curious. She sat perched on the seat in front of me, just staring at me, wondering how long it would be until I noticed. It went 45 minutes! (To this, my wife might say, "It figures!") But she really should give me a break- guys are generally a bit more clueless correct? And I would prefer to describe this tendency as an incredible ability to focus! ;>)



FREE HARDCOVER IDEA BOOK

Hello old Friends! Well, it is nice that the Covid-19 hullabaloo is fading away. That means you no longer have to arrange clandestine meetings in the night in order to meet someone in person! And it would be nice to see you. I would also love to get the 2nd edition of our book into your hands. You have all contributed to bringing this book into existence. Some of you have helped simply by your interest and desire to learn more about timber framing. And others of you with full-on engagement, getting a unique timber design constructed to match the tone and values you represent.

The physical book is only available in hardcover and has a librarian's stamp of approval. (Granted, the librarian in question is my wife, but keep in mind that wives can be extremely harsh critics! ;-) Upon reviewing the book the first time, her eyes widened in amazement- after all, she knows of my stupid tendencies and numerous belly flops! She of course had to question me, "Bert, did you actually write all of this?!!") She said the book is a class "A", worthwhile read- for both the high-quality pictures and content. I proudly tout this badge of honor because the truth is found close to home- and librarians really do see and read a ton of books!

You could just order it from Amazon for \$47 if you like, but it would be nicer if you would come by the shop and get a signed copy along with the companion planning guide workbook. Here is all you have to do.

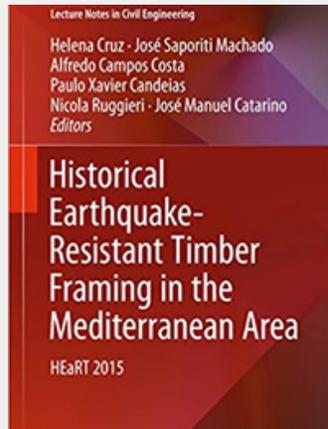
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3. Send a screenshot of the review you leave on Amazon to info@arrowtimber.com.

If you are unable to come by the shop to get your signed copy and companion planning guide, we can look at sending you them by mail. But I look forward to meeting you mask-free, in broad daylight!

RECOMMENDED READING

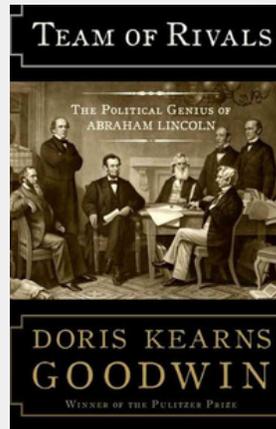
Historical Earthquake-Resistant Timber Frames in the Mediterranean Area



by Randolph Langenbach

GRADE: C+

Whew! When have you seen a book with a longer title? As you might have guessed it is a compilation of academic studies... A rather tough reading grind, which explains the C+! But the content is very interesting once you get through the academic clutter. Section 3 makes a case for timber frames with unreinforced masonry infill. Randolph suggests this is best for both building green and for unskilled laborers. The massing of "loose" masonry surrounded by timber "banding" provides a resilient structure idiots can build. (I question longevity and maintenance in wet climates like the PNW.) And these materials do not require the high energy output needed to make steel and concrete- a point we have also made in past articles. I can't help but wonder if these structures can quickly change frequencies to avoid the frequency alignment which destroys buildings during earthquakes? (Google 'Resonance Disaster' if this last sentence sounds like gibberish and you are curious!)



by Russ Harris

GRADE: A+

While I do not doubt that Abe Lincoln was also afflicted with sores from the sole of his feet to the crown of his head (Isaiah 1:6), I have to shake my head at the man's gifts! Compassion, patience, and wisdom, to name the top three. Doris Goodwin portrays in detail the political tension and unfolding pressures Lincoln faced during the Civil War. I can't imagine having the restraint Lincoln did, dealing with so many issues and political undercurrents. Did I get more compassion, patience, and wisdom from reading this book? Not that I've noticed. But I have found more enjoyment in seeking out differing viewpoints when making decisions- just like Lincoln did. His ability to get curious, listen and understand a rival's perspective just may have been his "superpower," which enabled such compassion and patience... Or perhaps his compassion, patience, and wisdom created his "superpower?"

HAPPINESS IS...

We instinctively run from pain, fear, and discomfort. And often, we pursue pleasure with a frenetic zeal. These tendencies can lead to feelings of panic, disorientation, depression, etc. Perhaps we should occasionally "zig" when our instincts tell us to "zag?" In other words, actively pursuing pain, uncertainty, and discomfort can shrink these demons that motivate our behavior. My sons introduced me to cold water therapy. To them, it was just a fun game- a thrill and challenge to see how long they could sit in cold water. I called it therapy because it

turned out to be an easy reset button- it really is meditation for dummies made easy! The only thing a person can think of while submerged to the neck in cold water is one's breathing. Voila! You, too, can have an easy reset button at your disposal! One easy way to start is with progressively longer periods of cold water during your shower. As an added reason to test this whack job idea, consider this: Some people tout this cold water therapy as an overall health booster. So you may get better circulation and an immune system boost- So come on down, friend, the water isn't so bad!

...MAKING COLD WATER YOUR FRIEND

THE ARROW TIMBER PHILOSOPHY

People want things which reflect their personality.

People want an enjoyable process with a mutual exchange.

People want teamwork, transparency, and creative solutions.

I experience this over and over in the course of a year, not only when clients view albums or 3-D models in my office, but especially so immediately after the completion of their timber structure. **Appreciative head nods and slow smiles have almost become a trademark!** I fell in love with the timber framing craft in 2002 and I still feel just as privileged and enthused. Many, many, personalized structures have been created since then. In fact, my **passion, artistry, and repertoire of creative solutions** have all grown dramatically... I sometimes wonder if it is simply something to do with rising to challenges and building upon success. You probably agree that exposed beams provide geometric beauty and resonate deep within our psyche... The style brings to mind **durability, longevity, safety, laughter, smiles, and home to many warm feelings.**



THE QUESTION

What is the best way for you to acquire your personalized timber living?

Not too much, not too little. Not too high, not too low. Just the right mix of timber presence and style... How to find that sweet spot which you can enjoy for years and pass on to your heirs. It's really about enriching the lives of those around you and sharing your unique personality and viewpoints with them. **How do you intend to achieve this? How will you determine a good fit with service providers?**

Seek out and choose, therefore, things that will evoke head nods and slow smiles. Things which resonate with your personality. Things that do not grow old or boring with the passage of time. You will not regret it.

To your goals, momentum, and happiness

Bert Sarkkinen, Owner

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