

## Builders Of Timber Frame Structures Help Owners Create A Legacy To Last A Lifetime

BY SUSAN E. CAMPBELL

Twenty years ago, on January 1, 1989, Legacy Timber Frames was incorporated to make beautiful frames for homes and buildings with the same care and craftsmanship as pieces of fine, handmade furniture.

To celebrate this milestone, president and CEO Annemarie Mitchell would like to have some type of "homecoming" over the summer.

"We have been so busy we haven't planned a celebration yet," Mitchell said. "But we want to invite the people we've built for and thank them for helping us get to 20 years."

Mitchell and business partner Dan Roseberger started Legacy Timber Frames, Inc. when the timber frame company they were working for went out of business.

"Several of our associates had talked about starting a company of our own when that company closed its doors," said Mitchell.

But only the two joined forces in the venture and immediately started to cut frames, she said.

Mitchell was a frame designer and Roseberger a subcontractor who put the frames up. Still today, Mitchell oversees the shop and Roseberger oversees the field.

"We build frames the way houses and barns were built hundreds of years ago, with posts and beams," said Mitchell. "Heavy timbers are adjoined with wooden pegs and wooden joining, rather than steel."

Mitchell designs the framing the old-fashioned way, too — by hand.

"I hand draw all the designs, just like the builders of 100-year-old farmhouses did," she said.

Mitchell has an interior design background

and she taught herself how to design frames for each custom building project according to the client's desires and specifications, be it a residential, light commercial or agricultural project.

"It doesn't have to be a complete timber frame home," said Mitchell. "We can do elements that dress up a home, such as a single room or entryway or roof structure, or even dress up the landscaping with timber."

Some of Legacy's projects include the entry to Comfort Suites Lake George, the lobby of Avila Retirement Community in Albany, the Ballston Spa Veterinary Clinic on Route 50, and many residential projects throughout the Northeast.

Legacy also featured timber-framed elements in three award-winning Witt Construction homes in Saratoga's Showcase of Homes during the last five years.

What Mitchell designs, Roseberger's team of installers erects. Each timber is custom designed and manufactured, by hand, for the client.

The timbers are completely exposed in a post and beam building. They need not be rough hewn and rustic. Some can be quite elegant, according to Mitchell, and styles constantly change.

Timber framing is an old craft that is being revived.

"As businesses and jobs become more technical, people may want a more natural environment to come home to," said Mitchell. "Timber frames are much warmer and natural than sheet rock."

"Timber keeps you more in touch with nature, what is earthy and green," she said. "You can't get any greener than this."

Frames are hand cut from native trees and there is no shipping from places like Brazil



*Annemarie Mitchell designs beautiful timber frame structures for both residential and commercial applications.*

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where some of specialty woods come from. Nor are chemicals used in processing.

Plus, Mitchell said timber frame homes are highly energy efficient to live in. There are structural insulated panels that envelope the outside of the timber frame that not only protect the framing but also provide the home with greater insulation value than traditional fiberglass material.

Once the timber frames and panels are in place, a general contractor typically completes the home. But if any questions arise during the construction phase, help from Legacy is a phone call away.

There are only 400 timber frame companies in the US and Canada combined and Mitchell believes Legacy Timber Frames has a strong niche in the market.

"Not many can do what we do," she said.

Mitchell and Roseberger are in the business of providing frames for homes that will last for generations to come.

"Why build a home when you can create a legacy?" she asked.

Looking ahead, Mitchell would like to expand the business.

"As housing starts decline, people are searching for ways to enhance an existing home," she said. "So we are focused on doing more trusses, timber accents, and garden structures such as pergolas and pavilions to make our craft more accessible to more people."

Visit Saratoga-based Legacy Timber Frames at their Web site, [www.legacytimberframes.com](http://www.legacytimberframes.com). Or call Annemarie Mitchell at 279-9108 during regular business hours. □