

AORAKI POLYTECHNIC

**In Association with
Log Builders Association of New Zealand**

Introduction to Log Building Techniques

Introduction to Log Home Construction

Course Information



Welcome

Welcome to this Log Building course – a joint education programme between Aoraki Polytechnic and the New Zealand Log Builders Association.

The two courses we offer are approved by ITPQ (Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality), the organisation responsible for approving all Polytechnic courses in New Zealand.

At the successful completion of each course you are entitled to receive a formal certificate from Aoraki Polytechnic recognising your achievements.

You can expect two weeks of intensive learning and demanding physical work. Your tutor is one of the most experienced, professional and internationally-recognised log builders and teachers.

We hope you enjoy the course and leave satisfied with the skills and knowledge you have gained in this 800-year-old craft.

Why do people build a Log Home?

There are many reasons people want to live in a log home, but one outweighs all others – wood. People want their homes to reveal wood, not conceal it. It's incomparably beautiful and rich with character. Wood's qualities are made all the more wonderful by the fact that it was once alive.

The log home comes from a tradition of building that is centuries old, now perfected by modern techniques and tools in the hands of experience craftsman. Naturally-shaped logs are carefully scribe-fitted one to another – a slow and precise way to fit the unique contours of two logs together. Then the logs are carefully shaped using chainsaw, chisels and sanders. The result is fits that are so tight the logs look like they grew together. This is the craft of log building.

The natural logs and craftsman's skill combine to make the unmistakable look and feel of a log home: warm, comforting, inviting, solid, quiet and sheltering. The builder's craft shows in every joint. A log home is a heritage, an enduring home that can last for centuries.

Course Location

This course will be held in the South Canterbury, New Zealand town of Geraldine.

You will need to find your way to Natural Log Homes Building yard on Kennedy Street, Geraldine by 8am on the Monday morning. We will meet the night before class starts as well—we'll let you know the details closer to the start date.

Air travel If you are arriving by plane the closest airports are Christchurch (CHC) (then a 1 1/2 hour drive south) or the smaller airport at Timaru (airport code TIU) (then a 15 minute drive north to Geraldine). Connections to Timaru are only through Wellington (WLG), New Zealand's capital city.

Road Travel From the north – Travel on SHW 1 until the turn off to SHW 72 at Rangitata. SHW 72 leads you into Geraldine.

From the south-travel on SHW 1 through Timaru, turning left on to the Winchester-Geraldine Highway at Winchester. This road takes you into Geraldine.

Natural Log Homes is in the southern part of Geraldine, on the corner of Kennedy and High Streets, one block west of Talbot Street, the north-south thoroughfare.

Tutor

Robert W. Chambers, who has been building handcrafted log homes since 1983, and has taught hundreds of students since 1988.

Accommodation and Food

You are responsible for arranging and paying for your own accommodation. Information on some accommodation options in Geraldine is included in this information pack. Billeting (staying with a local family) may be an option—please advise if you would like us to investigate this option for you.

You will need to provide your own breakfasts and evening meals. Lunch will be provided as part of the course.

Course Structure

- Each course runs for 13 days, with each working day commencing at 8am and finishing at 5pm. There will be morning and afternoon tea breaks and a half-hour to one-hour lunch break.
- One day of the course will be spent travelling to view other log constructions.
- There will be approximately 6 hours “classroom” work during each course. This may be covered on wet days, or in several evening sessions.
- The first two to three days will be spent working on disposable practice logs until the desired standard of workmanship is reached before any work is stated on the actual project. We will build a small log home shell as our course activity. The Log Builders Association of NZ sells the shell that we produce as a way to help keep your tuition at the lowest possible level.

What you need to bring

1. A high quality, modern chainsaw around the 44-66cc range, not smaller, not too big. 16- to 20- inch bar, no shorter, no longer. It must be fitted with a chain brake. 1 piece of spare pull cord and 1 spare spark plug. Fuel and oil will be provided at a mix of 25:1 (if you require different than this then please bring your own.) Chipper or semi-chisel chain only. No chisel or full-chisel chain.

** Overseas students do not need to bring a chainsaw (difficult to get through an airport), but please let us know, so we can arrange to hire one for you)*

2. A hammer,

3. A 25mm (1-inch wide) chisel
4. Your own safety helmet with muffs and visor attached. (Let us know if you cannot get one in time)
5. Your own chainsaw safety chaps, or safety trousers (we can supply, if you don't have any)
6. Steel-toed shoes or boots with non-marking soles. Most black soles leave ugly marks on logs.
7. A chalk line,
8. One 8-10m (20 or 25-foot) tape measure,
9. Spirit level 1.2 meters preferable.
10. One 8 to 12 inch inside-measuring calipers (if you can get them),
11. A pair of leather gloves,
12. Camera / video
13. Pen, pencils and note book.
14. Sun block.
15. Wet weather gear.
16. Flexible 12-inch ruler (General 1201ME) – or, will be for sale at course.
17. Carpenter's pencils, black felt markers ("Sharpies" are good)

Text book The following text is required reading for the course:

Chambers, Robert W. "Log Construction Manual"

Published by Deep Stream Press

ISBN 0-9715736-0-3

This can be purchased from the Log Builders Association of New Zealand. Or at www.LogBuilding.org

Email: radmtn@paradise.net.nz

Telephone: 03 435 0071 (dial +64-3-435-0071 from overseas)

Postal address: PO Box 167
Twizel 7944
South Canterbury, New Zealand

We advise you buy the textbook and read as much as you can before your course starts. You will learn more if you are prepared ahead of time. Also, there is relatively little time to read during the 2-week courses.

Course "Rules"

- No drugs or alcohol

No alcohol or substances which could cause even a momentary mental confusion will be permitted on the site. No person who appears to be under the influence will be allowed on site.

- Safety

Students are learning to work with high speed cutting tools in close proximity to others. You must stay alert at all times. There will be a great emphasis on safety

throughout the course. Safety is each individual's responsibility – look after those around you. The instructor will require you to have, and to properly use: eye and ear protection, cutting chaps, safety boots.

- Attend all Sessions

Students are required to attend and fully participate in all sessions, unless they have permission from the tutor to be absent.

- No pets

No pets or animals are allowed at the work site.

- Instant Dismissal

The LBANZ and Aoraki Polytechnic reserve the right to dismiss instantly any student who in any way poses a threat to safety or to the learning processes of others or themselves.