CLANCY, MONTANA

MARKS LUMBER TIMBERFRAME

A Name You Can Trust

Marks Lumber is your choice for quality specialty forest products including timbers, rough-sawn boards, circle-sawn flooring, and natural wood siding products. Marks Lumber is also a premium supplier of custom timber frames. From project design to developing accurate estimates to providing material to providing guidance for maintenance of your wood products, the Marks Lumber team is with you every step of the way.

Owner/Operator Steve Marks and his wife Laura are proud to carry on over 75 years of Marks family tradition, providing lumber products from Clancy, Montana. Working from the beautiful Marks Ranch, the entire Marks Lumber team is committed to providing top quality lumber products in an ecologically sound fashion. This friendly, customer-focused team has the experience, expertise and desire to make your project successful.

Made-in-Montana Timber Frames

Marks Lumber added a dedicated timber framing team in 2007, making us your local, custom timber frame and post and beam provider. Being a Tier 1 timber products producer allows Marks Lumber to provide top-quality, Grown-in-Montana, Made-in-Montana timber frame solutions.

Marks Lumber Timberframe is a full-service timber shop. We can, and do perform projects of all sizes, with customers of all types and experience levels. The team at Marks Lumber has helped guide many first-time timber frame owners from dreams and concepts to complete projects.

We look forward to helping you on your timber frame journey!

Premium Timber Frame Services

Marks Lumber takes pride in being a premium provider of timber frame and post and beam construction services. Having worked on hundreds of projects over the years, we feel that providing some education on: what to expect during a project; how to evaluate partners and suppliers; and some tips on how to begin a timber project would have been very valuable to many of our customers.

We developed this guide specifically for home owners, but have another guide tailored for building professionals as well.

This guide will provide you with:

- **An understanding of basic timber frame terminology and concepts.**
- **Some activities that will help ensure a successful timber frame project.**
- **Easy access to some excellent educational resources.**
- **Some guidance on how to evaluate professionals to help design and build your project.**

Getting Started

At Marks Lumber, we find it helpful to take discussions in one of two directions. Are we talking about a “full timber frame”? Or some type of “post and beam” structure? What’s the difference?

Simply put, Marks Lumber considers any structural frame assembled with primarily traditional woodwork joints to make traditional bents a “timber frame” or “full frame.” Any other kind of timber structure, we lump into the post and beam category.

Timber frame structures are amazing structures with timeless beauty. A full frame requires exceptional skill and care in design and construction. This skilled labor is the primary driver, making complete timber frame builds more expensive than other construction techniques.

A post and beam structure can be almost anything, built with a variety of techniques, and gives us a great deal of design flexibility for many types of buildings--in either a structural or decorative role. Examples include: entries; complete frames; pole barns; corbels or brackets; lofts-the list goes on and on.

Marks Process and Services

Marks Lumber is happy to discuss your project at any stage. If you are planning a building and would like to get ideas, Marks Lumber would love to take the time to understand your vision, then give you some guidance on how to proceed with your project.

Types of 'Timber Frames'

When discussing any technical topic, it is important to clarify verbiage to facilitate the transfer of ideas and concepts. With any craft that has been practiced for thousands of years, there are differing opinions on precise definitions.

Here are just a few, really important definitions to get us started, these are paraphrased from the excellent Glossary maintained by the Timber Framers Guild. *https://www.tfguild.org/downloads/Glossary2015.pdf*

Beam – A horizontal timber.

Bent - Assemblage of timbers perpendicular to the ridge, usually the crossframe of a building, sometimes including rafters.

Joinery - The work of connecting timbers using woodwork joints; the joints themselves.

Post – A vertical timber.

Post and Beam - 1. Structural system made up primarily of vertical and horizontal members. 2. Such a system in which floor and roof loads are carried by principal timbers simply butted together and fastened with structural hardware.

Timber Frame - Frame of large timbers connected by structural woodwork joints and supporting small timbers to which roof, walls and floors are fastened. Sometimes called a full frame.

Truss - In carpentry, a network of timbers forming a rigid support structure.






Timber Construction – An Ancient Art in the Modern World

Wood fiber has been used to build structures as long as humans have been building shelter. Timberframe techniques developed over a long period of time to allow for the construction of grand structures utilizing existing machinery and tool technologies. For centuries, timber frame was done entirely with hand tools and block and tackle.

Many cultures have timber frame traditions. Of course, there are many timber frames in Europe, including grand churches, inns, and residences that are centuries old. And there would be many more if a vast number had not been destroyed during World War II. In Japan, builders found that it was easier to build typhoon resistant buildings with quality joinery and timbers, that are inherently elastic, than rigid stone alone—so the Japanese created their own amazingly beautiful timber frame traditions and techniques.

Early European settlers brought timber frame knowledge to America as they settled, starting in the early 1600's. In fact, colonists at Jamestown manufactured huge 4 ft x 4 ft x 120 ft hand-sawn oak cants for export. Unfortunately, they couldn't get the huge pieces into the hold of the ship sent to transport them!

The End of Timber Frame

The industrial revolution brought mechanized sawmills that could mass produce small, uniform, easy-to-handle boards along with inexpensive iron nails. These technological advances caused construction techniques to shift from timber frame to balloon construction. In the 1970's, historically minded carpenters began practicing traditional timber frame craft with woodwork joinery and the niche market began to grow for traditional structures.

Timber frame Reborn

Today, there are incredible timber frames being built by craftsmen using tools across the technology spectrum. Some practitioners use only the simple, traditional hand tools. Some companies have fantastic CNC machines that can create nearly perfect frame members. Many practitioners use a combination of traditional techniques and modern tools.

Marks Lumber Timberframe Approach

Marks Lumber embraces that combination of technology and working with our hands. We rely on Computer Aided Design (CAD) in our timber frame process, although timber pieces and woodwork joints are generally created by hand with the assistance of modern tools.

Our focus is on being a premier provider of custom timber frame as well as post and beam constructed products. Over the years we have worked with many local contractors and are happy to work with new people at any time.

The Marks Lumber Timberframe shop has the experience, skill, tooling, and desire to complete projects of all sizes and complexity.

Making Your Dream a Reality – The Design Process

Designing the perfect home, business, or outdoor living space requires effort and commitment. Here are some key things you can do to ensure that the completed project is a success.

- **Educate yourself early in the process**
- **Find Suppliers who listen and work to understand your vision**
- **Don't be afraid to ask questions!**
- **Check Partner and Supplier Experience**

Marks Lumber Service During Design Phase

Marks Lumber is a valuable resource during the design of your project. We are happy to provide consultation to designers about particulars and details of any timber frame or post and beam construction. Common questions may involve:

- **High-level guidance on effective scale and size for timber structures**
- **Guidance on appropriate timber dimensions for a structure**
- **Details on Joinery**
- **Approximate or relative cost differences between different design approaches**
- **How to add a frame or post and beam structure to existing plans**
- **Details such as appropriate connections or calculating correct measurement offsets.**

Architects

Marks Lumber is an expert resource that the architect of your choice can rely on for details of materials and techniques as they relate to custom timber frame construction. We can provide ideas for cost effective approaches, feasibility of design details and suggestions that will help meet the most critical design goals.

Engineering

Timber frame and post and beam construction is not practiced as commonly as some other types of construction, and finding engineers who have expertise and experience in these types of projects can be challenging. Marks Lumber has relationships with professionals who have this expertise. These partners work with us to achieve design goals and ensure the viability of concepts.

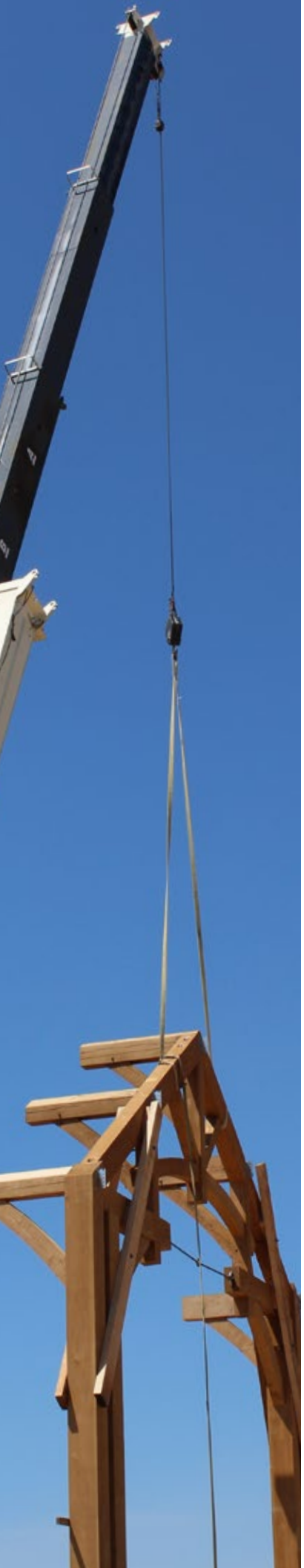
Coordination and Planning – Success Starts During Design!

With Marks Lumber as your timber frame supplier, you can count on communication and project coordination. Marks Lumber will make sure that your builder knows what to expect, will keep them up to date on scheduling, and will help them be prepared for delivery, regardless of our role later in the project. Logistics can be critical on timber projects, and Marks Lumber has the experience to make sure that all involved parties understand what is going to be required to complete projects.

Timber frame Cost

It is important to determine what the cost of a project is going to be relatively early on. Unfortunately, it is hard to estimate a cost for a post and beam or timber frame structure without knowing the details.

Generally, timber frame is more expensive than traditional construction. Many industry experts say that it will be at least 15% more for the same size structure, with 20-25% not being uncommon.



Construction Process

Having Marks Lumber construct your timber project allows peace of mind during your timber frame or post and beam project build.

Marks Lumber generally constructs post and beam members from detailed, approved shop drawings. Using a combination of traditional techniques and modern hand tools allows Marks to create fantastic, hand crafted and fit structures. This approach allows Marks Lumber to service the many different types of customers and jobs as they come about.

We don't offer house or cabin kits, but we can build almost any design that comes to mind!

Services that Marks Lumber Provides

Specific services provided by Marks Lumber can obviously vary by the situation and requirements of each project and structure. Marks can do any of the following:

- **Manufacture Timber and Post and Beam components in the timber shop**
- **Raise Complete Frames**
- **Manufacture difficult to make timber components Example: put a specific chamfer on a long beam**
- **No brag, just fact: If you have seen something you love, we can probably build it. If you can dream it, let's talk about it, we can probably build that, too!**

Things Builders Need to Understand

1. **Plan ahead!** It can take a significant amount of time to complete a timber frame. It can take months to source timbers. Individual components can take significant time to complete, so finishing an entire frame will take a while and coordination is critical.

2. Marks Lumber cannot warehouse completed projects for long periods of time; so, again, coordination is critical.

3. Marks Lumber will make sure that your builder understands equipment and staff requirements for dealing with timber products that Marks Lumber Timberframe will deliver.






Resources

Here are other educational resources to help you get started with timber frame.

1. www.timberhomeliving.com
2. www.timberframehq.com
3. www.tfguild.org

Next Steps

Armed with this guide, you are ready to move ahead with building your ideal timber structure. Here is a recap of ideal activities that will enable a successful build.

1. **Define Success** – What are your priorities? What things are most important to you? Make sure you can articulate these things to prospective members of your design team.

2. **Narrow Your Search** – Find examples and make lists of things that strike your fancy. Give your design team something to work with!

3. **Talk to Professionals** – With your desires and goals documented, start talking to building industry professionals. Stop by Marks Lumber, and discuss your project with our team - we would love to get your project off on the right foot.

4. **Find your design team** - It is really important to find design professionals who you feel will listen to your vision, and who have experience.

5. **Find a General Contractor** – Ideally, a general contractor will have some timber experience even if you are engaging a specialty timber contractor. Experienced, reputable local firms can successfully complete your project too, especially when working with a professional timber frame team like Marks Lumber Timberframe.

Marks Lumber can help you understand what is feasible with your budget, so define what you want, and get with us and we'll make it happen!

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30 Lump Gulch Road / Clancy, MT 59634
P: (406) 933-5794 / markslumber.com