

Creuzot's goal: Making dreams come true

By Mark MacDonald *Publisher*

PRINCE GEORGE - Making dreams come true.

That's what Allen Creuzot's company, Creuzot Homes & Construction Ltd. aims to do.

And as they do, they've been recognized for their efforts. Their work on the Moffat residence earned them a Northern B.C. Housing Award from the Prince George Home Builders Association for the Best Single Family Detached Home over 3,500 square feet.

"I enjoy what I'm doing," he says. "Someone told me that you're going to be working a lot of years, so you'd better enjoy doing it. I like the building, and the actual business side of it all."

The Creuzot name is synonymous with building in Prince George. Allen is a fourth generation builder.

"My family has been building homes for over 60 years. I've been wandering around job sites all my life," he says.

Allen's great grandfather, Max, grandfather Henry and father Gary all carried the torch before him.

"At the time I started in the business, I was more of a pain in the rear end than anything else," he says.

"My uncle George started the Canadian Home Builders Association of B.C. here in Prince George, and it moved to Vancouver.

"The reason they started it was to have more continuity in the industry, and trying to have more uniform building practices," he says. "That's why they started it, as well as for some camaraderie."

Creuzot was President of the PGHBA in 1998-2000, and he's been on the board for a decade. He's also served on the Canadian Home Builders Association of BC (CHBA BC) for seven years.

"It's a fun industry to be involved in, especially on a provincial and national level," he says.

Technological advancements make it critical that home builders keep up with new products and innovations in the construction industry, and keep their team of workers up to date with training courses.

"We're always updating courses," he says. "It's a changing industry, so we want to make sure we keep up to date."

In addition to holding his Registered Housing Professional (RHP) designation personally, Creuzot's company carries the Certified Residential Builder (CRB) label.

"We were the first builder in Prince George to receive our Residential Builders License as issued by the Homeowner Pro-



Allen Creuzot in front of a Creuzot Homes & Construction Ltd. built home

tection Office of BC," he says. "Our company is both R2000 qualified and certified.

"We cannot build like my grandfather and father did," he notes. "There have been so many changes, and if you don't keep up, you can get into trouble."

"Homes aren't boxes anymore. Now we're building very different types and styles of homes," he says. "Energy efficiency is a big factor nowadays, and we're using more and more green products."

A journeyman carpenter, Creuzot also graduated from

the Construction Engineering Technology program at the College of New Caledonia in the mid 1980's, then moved to Vancouver for four years before returning home, and working with his father before starting his own company in 1995.

Like most builders in the city, they endured their share of ups and downs prior to the current market resurgence.

"Prince George has come out of a pretty rough time," notes Creuzot, adding there were only 47 new housing starts in 2001. "We were working in the lower mainland framing with

our crew, and in Alberta, just to keep going in the late '90's.

"Now, in the last little while, it's busy again, and we're trying to take on whatever jobs we can."

"Right now, we're busy doing custom houses," he says. "On most custom homes, I work with a design team if we need them."

"It's trying to understand what people want, as close as possible," he says. "It's a very fun business, but it can be stressful to build a home. That's what we're here for - to take the stress out of it.

When Creuzot builds a home, he takes note that in most cases, women buy the homes.

"Women usually buy homes, so we spend a lot of time on the entry way, the bathrooms, and the kitchen," he says. "Men usually look at the garage, first, to see if there's room for their truck, and room for a work bench."

"We keep that in mind when we're building, and it pays off," he says.

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