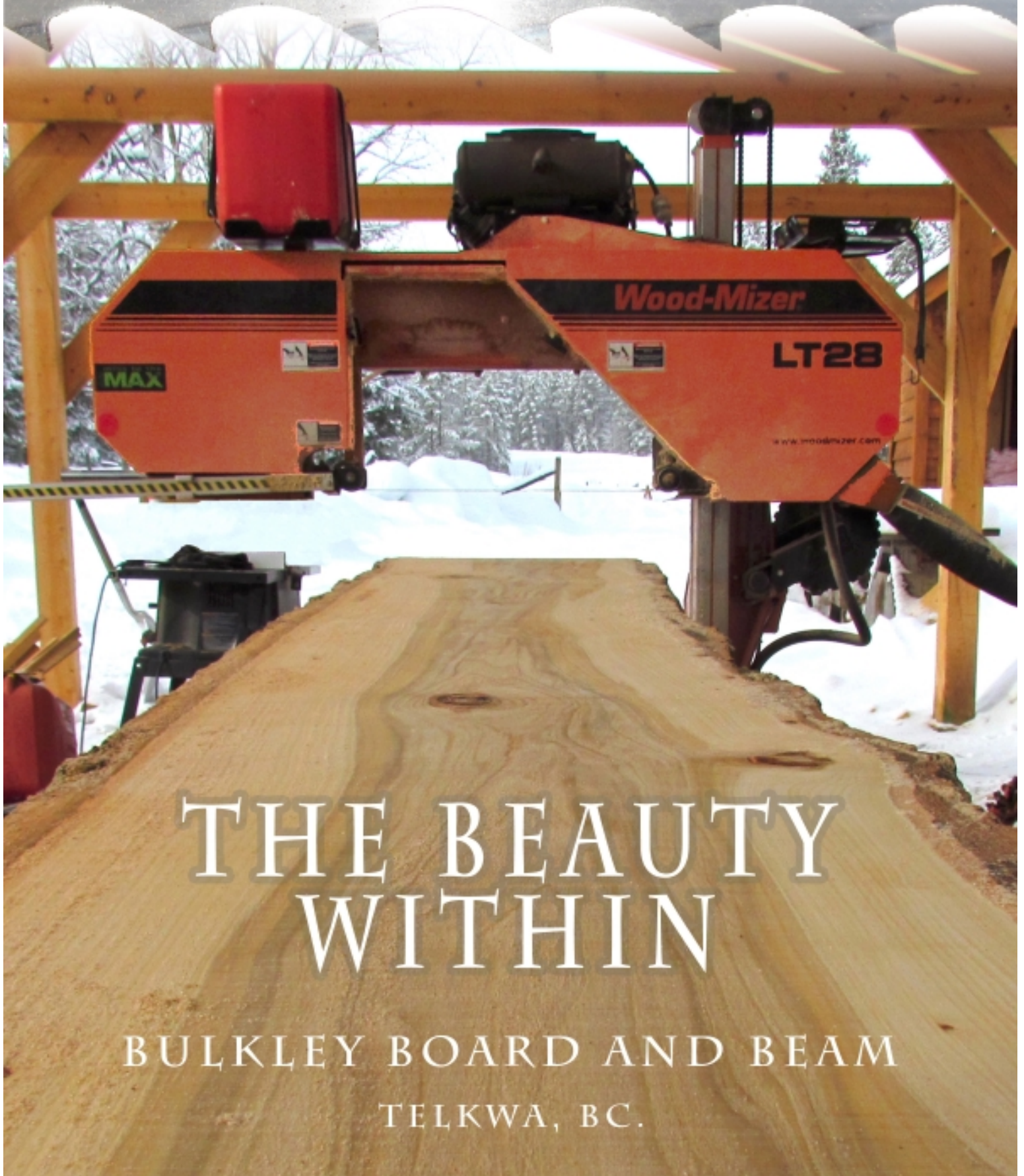


THE STREETCORNER

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THE BEAUTY WITHIN

BULKLEY BOARD AND BEAM
TELKWA, BC.

Building Lives

by Mike Cunningham

Bulkley Board and Beam (BB&B) is not your ordinary sawmill business. As an outreach effort of Streetcorners Ministries it exists for the unique purpose of building and shaping lives, with sawing and cutting wood as a place to start. Most people are immediately struck with how beautiful fresh cut wood is, finally exposed and given purpose. There is literally nothing like it: its grain, its strength, its workability, and its potential.

Logs come in all shapes and sizes, but it's not until someone comes along and recognizes its potential, its hidden beauty, that things really begin to happen. People are like that too.

The Beauty Within

So much more important than wood, is the fact that every person is valuable. And added to it, that every person has a chance to know and experience that value.

The sad reality is, however, that so many simply don't know, or can't believe that they are worth anything to anyone.

For 20 years my wife and I have worked with young people who have grown up in broken circumstances, and have had to try make life work somehow. We have been spectators to their struggle to find an education, healthy relationships, self confidence, employment, and a place to belong. I couldn't have imagined just how hard it would be for most to find their healthy place in this world.

For many, fear, shame and pain have become the norm. Often they end up frustrated, and isolated as they have learned to retreat, rather than risk another failure or rejection.

An Encouraging Voice

It's against this backdrop that the Bulkley Board and Beam sawmill outreach exists. Our purpose is to come alongside young men in particular, be an encouragement, and offer tools and skills needed for life. It is like approaching a raw log, believing in the beauty beneath the scars, and going after it. It is the mission of BB & B to speak into the lives of its participants things like:

You belong! Here is a place where you are welcome, and you are a part of. You are free to learn here, to fail here, and to grow here.

You are valuable! Just for being uniquely you. You are worth getting to know and worth being heard. You are meaningful and respected.

You are important! There is responsibility to be carried by you. Within you is something to contribute. You have something to offer that is unique to you.

You are competent! You can learn to handle responsibility well. You can make decisions and be a person of leadership and influence.

More than just creating employment, our goal is to offer one another supportive and meaningful relationships. Each day we start with a sharing and prayer time, where the guys can talk about what's going on in their lives. I always enjoy this time as the guys reach out and encourage one another.



Products and Services

BB & B seeks to build with our hands what we desire to become in our lives: beautiful, hand-made, pieces of workmanship, and each with a story.

With our portable LT 28 Wood-Mizer Sawmill and a woodworking shop, we are able to custom cut lumber, beams, siding, etc. From these we are able to manufacture many different value added products such as outbuildings, pole buildings, picnic tables, playhouses, benches and countertops, etc.

Each item we make is a potential learning experience, a stepping stone, or a launching pad into meaningful things ahead.

Tools for Life

What are some of the tools that a person can gain from this experience? One of the biggest is a sense of accomplishment. One young man framed the picture of him and I in front of his first shed and it hangs on his living room wall today. Also important are the experience and skills learned in the process: communicating, planning, measuring, and using tools. These skills can then be applied to other job situations, and can give guys the confidence needed to take steps towards a career. Having this program on their resume can also increase their chances of getting that next job.



The work environment around the sawmill is full of real life applications. Here are just a few:

- *don't judge a tree by what it looks like on the outside*
- *you can get through a mountain of logs...one at a time*
- *start with a plan, and then work it out with care and attention*
 - *good tools are costly, but worth it!*
- *listen, and you'll know what to do when you need to do it!*
 - *we all make mistakes*
- *wood is first broken down by saws to make it more usable*
 - *there is satisfaction in making something yourself*

These are just a few of the basic principles of life that show up regularly in the work we do together. Growth is a process. To learn and grow in your own life and in your relationships takes honest work and determination.

Our Source of Value and the Power to Change.

Are our products valuable? I would say, of course! Why? Because, we made them. We poured ourselves into them and made them from scratch.

God's Word, the Bible, teaches us that "We are God's workmanship." (Eph. 2:10) Where does our dignity and value come from? From the fact that each of us are handmade and with a purpose. No matter what shape, size, culture, or skill, each person has a unique value attached to their being. We do not earn it by performing well. We do not lose it by failure or mistakes. God is the source of all purpose in life. He has promised his divine help for growth and change to all who are looking for it. This is His work and has become ours also in BB & B. Thank you for your interest in this endeavor.



We remember Fabian Williams

November 11, 1986 to January 26, 2014



Fabian was one of our first employees at BB & B. I had known him since he was a little boy on a bicycle in Fort Babine.

Tragically, Fabian died this last spring as a young man of 27 years old.

We would like to pay tribute here to our friend, who worked with us on many projects.

As all who knew Fabian can tell you, Fabian had a quick wit (that you didn't want to get on the bad side of!) and a good heart. At the start, we had some issues. But, every time we would have a talk about something that had come up, I would see a genuine effort to improve. Fabian



grew to become one of our most respectful young men.

I'll never forget when he came to work one day with a new tool belt and hammer. He was so proud to bring his own tools to work! He would always take a picture of anything he had made and post it on facebook!

Fabian had a battle with addictions that plagued him till the end of his life. The picture at the top of this page was taken on the roof of the last shed that we built together. During this time he was particularly battling alcohol, and trying to make a break from it.

On one occasion that I will never forget, we were unloading a pickup load of firewood and he stopped in the middle and asked if we could talk. He said that he wanted to pray and ask God to give him the strength to overcome his struggles. He bowed his head and gave his life to God.



I wish I could say that his problems all went away at that point. They didn't. But, to quote C.S. Lewis, "the cure had begun." In that moment Fabian was forgiven by God for all his sins. He was accepted and given the value and privileges of a child of God. Why? Because he sincerely asked for it. He cried out for mercy, and God promises that he will not turn away anyone who calls out to him genuinely for forgiveness and new life (John 1:12).

I cherish the memory of Fabian. We grieve his loss, and grieve with his girlfriend, and two small girls that remain in our community. We pay tribute to the battle that he fought and the legacy that he left behind.

Fabian, we miss you walking off the bus and getting in our truck. We thank God that you made your peace with him during your time on earth. We will see you again.



The Original Board & Beam

We would like to acknowledge the board and beam that stands out above all the others. For it was on a rough cut old board, nailed to a rough cut old beam that the most significant event of all human history occurred. It is this cross that gives meaning to all we are and do.

Our goal is to value people.

We can do this only because God has made each person with a priceless worth. The board & beam on which Jesus died showed us the full extent of God's love.

Our privilege is to love others.

The board and beam of Calvary shows us God's nature and demonstrates that love gives

completely of itself to rescue another. Here God rescues us from our sins.

Our freedom is grace.

On this board and beam Jesus died to cleanse and pardon. I'm forgiven, so I can forgive others.

Our hope is life.

Jesus rose again to bring us new life. He promises the hope of change, and the power to live. This is His gift to all who receive his forgiveness and follow him in his way of love.

We at Board & Beam can be reminded of these things with every board and beam we cut. We can live today with hope and love, because of God's great love for us. For this we are thankful, and this we share with you.



This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. 1 John 3:16 NIV



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WHAT WE BELIEVE

The Bible and Its Authority

a) We believe in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as verbally inspired by God and inerrant in the original writings, and that they are the supreme and final authority in faith and conduct.

The Eternal Godhead

b) We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Man and His Need

c) We believe that man was created in the image of God; that through sin man incurred both spiritual and physical death. Consequently, man is totally depraved, alienated from God, under his righteous anger, and in need of the new birth.

Jesus Christ and His Work

d) We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary and is true God and true man.

e) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that all who believe in him are justified on the ground of his shed blood.

f) We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ, in his ascension into heaven, his present life there for us as High Priest and Advocate and in his personal return.

Salvation for Sinners

g) We believe that by the grace of God, all who in repentance and faith receive the Lord Jesus Christ are born again by the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God. Such are sealed unto the day of redemption. Nevertheless, the believer is commanded to be filled with the Spirit, moment by moment.

The Future

h) We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, in the everlasting blessedness of the saved, and in the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost.

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