

Training in LWF construction in Mysore by Canadian Wood

Background

In DelhiWood 2017, Forestry Innovation Consulting India Pvt. Ltd (FII India) displayed a North American style home, constructed using the light wood-frame (LWF) method.

The exhibit was a walkthrough installation with unfinished walls and ceilings, topped by an exposed roof structure. The partial-finish theme allowed visitors to closely inspect and thereby understand the unique construction and weatherproofing on display, the discreet inclusion of services and insulation, the prefabricated style, as well as the interface of structural materials with interior fit-out and exterior claddings.

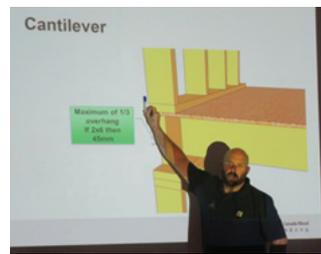
This exhibit garnered not just awareness, but also interest, resulting in numerous enquiries to FII about LWF design, with a surprising volume of them coming from South India.

FII was aware that wooden houses were becoming popular in the south for resorts, beach locations, hill stations, farmhouses, and areas with infrastructure and access challenges, but these houses were either de-mountable or portable, & constructed in a different style. The predominant method was prefabricated tongue and groove-interlocking boards, hence it was encouraging to see the same manufacturers who prefer those methods express curiosity in LWF construction.

The challenge for FII then, was to provide relevant training and share the knowledge that is necessary for interested parties to construct effectively without compromising on industry standards, as well as impart the necessary skills and techniques to their workforce and tradesmen.

We roped in Dan Drummond, a professional builder and instructor from Canada, to teach FII's inaugural LWF training course in India. Dan had previously performed the same role for Canada Wood in Shanghai, China, and so had the experience

as well as the course structure in place, including a detailed-but-edited version of "Guide to Good Practice" (China version) that can be used as a classroom and homework resource.



The venue was arranged in Mysore. The class size was limited to twenty-five including four FII staff. All materials including lumber, OSB panels, tools, and fasteners had been imported by FII from Canada. The course lasted a full nine days, offering participants theory sessions in a classroom in

the morning, followed by a practical session in a workshop in the afternoon. In the workshop, everyone got the opportunity to apply classroom knowledge as well as work in teams with tools.

It was commendable that participants ranging from company directors to factory floor employees honoured their commitment to tradecraft over those nine consecutive days. This was no easy task for people who ran their own businesses and had daily responsibilities in their respective companies.

The course was hands-on, with all participants contributing to the cutting, nailing, measuring and construction of the foundation and the floor, wall and roof framing, and bracing, using a variety of quality tools.

Dan had arrived a week prior to the course and had checked the venue, a factory space with sufficient floor-space to erect a 2.0m x 4.0m two-storey building, while accommodating twenty-five people with tools and equipment along with building materials. The trainee house needed a clear height of 6.0m under the factory roofline and trusses. Dan supervised the pouring of a concrete curb wall with anchor bolts for fixing timber plates to the foundation.

The course required all participants to learn through action, and resulted in a light timber-frame house constructed from start to finish over the duration of the course. The house consisted of prefabricated stud wall sections over two levels with flooring & sheathing, three windows, an inside partition wall and door opening, roof trusses with eaves and fascia, & a fully sheathed roof. An entry stair was added and the house was considered complete to lockup stage.



It was very encouraging for FII to realise that this inaugural course was oversubscribed. FII intends to hold a second course, identical in format, in North India in the early part of 2019, and we fully expect that course to be oversubscribed as well. The feedback from participants was extremely positive, which leads us to conclude that a follow-up course will be duly considered too.