

# TWO LEADING CUSTOM HOME BUILDERS MERGE THEIR TALENTS

Copper Falls Custom Homes Was Officially Launched Just This Spring

PRINCE GEORGE – When two of the leading custom home builders in the Prince George region decided to join forces earlier this year the results were a company that combined the best of both, bringing to the area a collective experience in home construction spanning nearly three decades. Created in April, **Copper Falls Custom Homes Ltd.** is the co-operative merger of **Scheck Construction** and **Sequoia Signature Homes**. There's a touch of similarity to

“We don't want to build something that is just a pretty finished product, but something that is going to last.”

**BRENT SCHECK**  
CO-OWNER, COPPER FALLS CUSTOM HOMES LTD.

the journey that eventually led to the joining of these two like-minded custom home building firms. While both **Jeff Stewart** (Sequoia) and **Brent Scheck** were born and raised in the Prince George area, the pair actually began their home construction careers in Alberta, learning their

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Jeff Stewart (left) and Brent Scheck are the co-owners of the recently launched Copper Falls Custom Homes



Copper Falls Custom Homes' projects are known for the quality of the workmanship and for the materials used that extra feature discerning home buyers are increasingly demanding



The administrative offices and showroom for Copper Falls Custom Homes are located at 130 – 1990 Ogilvie Street

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

craft and the intricacies of operating a successful business, before a desire to return home saw them come back to the region.

“We both started our companies in Alberta. I started Sequoia in Calgary in 2003 but I eventually moved back to Prince George. Doing our trades led us both into home building. I came back here in 2008. We both have family here, we both have kids and we both wanted the opportunity to raise them here where we grew up,” Stewart recalled.

Scheck Construction was launched in Red Deer, Alberta in 2004, where it was based for the first three years of its existence before moving to Prince George. While it’s often the case that great carpenters tend to come from families already in that business that wasn’t the case for Stewart but for Scheck there were carpenters in the family, so each found their way to their chosen vocation via different routes.

“When I went to Calgary I didn’t intend to go into this field but when I was younger I enjoyed construction and carpentry so when I went to Alberta looking for work the place to be was Calgary, and the thing to do was carpentry as there was so much building going on at the time it just naturally pulled me in and I never looked back. After eight years of living there we decided it was time to move back to Prince



**A home designer and a custom builder, Copper Falls Custom Homes works with clients throughout the project**

George to raise our family and hope that business would excel there,” Stewart said.

Scheck’s path also led him to Alberta, which is where he started Scheck Construction. “I did my apprenticeship here in Prince George working for a commercial company where I had the opportunity to work with numerous

experienced carpenters and gain a knowledge and passion for the trade. When I moved to Alberta I found a job right away and soon realized the timing was right to start my company and pursue home building,” Scheck said.

While both have been involved in commercial construction projects in the past, the satisfaction that comes from designing and building a home for a family has become especially gratifying for the pair. Handing over the keys at the conclusion of the project, knowing their vision and efforts have produced a residence that could be in that family for generations has become an especially sweet reward for both Scheck and Stewart.

“That’s a huge goal for us. We want to build something that will last a lifetime. We firmly believe in delivering a home that is designed and built with quality throughout. We want to walk away knowing we’ve done the best we can, knowing there’s quality behind the drywall, a quality that will serve



**A home theatre room is the sort of extra feature discerning home buyers are increasingly demanding**

that family for decades. We don’t want to build something that is just a pretty finished product, but something that is going to last. We definitely take a lot of pride in doing what we do,” Scheck said. “While we are custom builders, that doesn’t mean we don’t do entry level homes. It doesn’t matter to us if it’s big or small

the quality will always be there. We’re building someone’s home and that’s a big responsibility. Just because someone may not have as big a budget as someone else that doesn’t mean anything – we just like to build nice homes – the homes our clients

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The company can work with any client or budget, from high end residences to entry level family homes

need and can afford. Nice to us doesn't have to be big it just has to be done right."

Stewart stresses that no home is too small or somehow beneath the interest of Copper Falls. "When I got back the majority of my experience had been involved in building a lot of fairly large homes in Alberta and my portfolio featured them. I soon learned that people were actually hesitant to contact me, to see if I was willing to build their houses as they needed something smaller or simpler. But that's simply not the case and we both want people to understand that."

Copper Falls Custom Homes operates with a distinctive business model and corporate philosophy. Operating as a general contractor the company will rely on its core of trusted sub trades, but very selectively. Whenever possible the company and its in-house team of builders will handle most of the duties directly, employing outside trades as the needs warrant.

Over the years both owners have developed relationships with many of the region's top plumbers, electricians, finishers and others, regularly employing them on their projects. But the company definitely tries to handle as many of the duties in-house as it can to ensure a complete continuity in quality



While the company was only formed this year, it represents the merger of two of the area's top custom builders

and workmanship throughout. "Even before the merger it's kind of funny but Jeff and I found ourselves basically using the same sub trades on our projects. We clearly had compatible business models and similar quality expectations, so we relied on the same sub trades. Obviously now that's no longer an issue," Scheck said.

In addition to its construction services Copper Falls also provides a full in-house design service for its clients. The firm is capable of operating from multiple plan ideas or even concepts drawn on a napkin.

"We work with the client at every stage, from start to finish.

Someone may come to us with a rough idea that we can take and working with our designers, come up with a plan that highlights our customer's ideas. It's all about making people comfortable and ensuring the process is enjoyable not stressful, helping them take their ideas and apply them is a huge part of what we enjoy. That's what it's all about," Scheck said.

That's not to say drawing plans for their customers is required, many customers bring in their completed plans and Copper Falls is more than ready to give pricing and help them bring their home

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Whenever possible Copper Falls Custom Homes makes use of natural materials such as wood and stone



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

to reality.

Another distinctive part of the Copper Falls Custom Homes business model is its unique 1,400 square foot showroom, housed at the company's offices at 130 - 1990 Ogilvie Street in Prince George.

"There are very few builders in the area that maintain a showroom like this. As Brent and I have been able to merge together we've been able to open up our showroom so we can show customers all of their finishes from exterior to interior," Stewart said.

"We've set up a first class shop where the customers can see that we're invested in what we do. We're here by design and want to stay here, so we've invested in that commitment."

The Copper Falls showroom has samples of virtually everything a new home customer might be interested in, with the exception of a select few which are conveniently filled by nearby providers of these products.

"You'd have to class us as a one stop shop for someone wanting to build a home. Most people in Prince George haven't seen anything like what we've presented in our showroom," he said.

Scheck is equally excited about the opportunities the showroom can provide the company's clients. "It has been created to provide a professional environment for people to come in and be able to pick and choose almost every aspect of their home in one place," he said.

As with other custom builders the importance of energy efficiency is increasingly important for Copper Falls and its expanding client list. "We try our best within each customer's budget to offer the leading energy efficient products available and make them standard in many areas," Scheck said.

"We use Insulated Concrete Form (ICF) in our foundation which gives you a better R-value in your foundation. We're putting exterior foam on the outside to boost the R-value of our exterior walls. We provide a 50 year



A unique part of the Copper Falls Custom Homes business model is its spacious and convenient showroom

warranty on our roof shingles, so we're trying to provide an overall better house to the consumer - that's the bottom line."

An exciting opportunity for the first year of Copper Falls is being involved in the new gated community Forest Park. For Fall 2017 Copper Falls will function as the preferred builder for the entire Forest Park subdivision. This significant milestone for the company is an expansion of the services it already provides, and is an area of business that could become increasingly important for the company in the future.

"Thanks in large part to the reputation we've developed over the years we were approached by a developer earlier this year, right in the midst of our merger, to be part of a rare opportunity to offer our product and brand to his vision. This will be a gated



Homes designed and built by Copper Falls Custom Homes are constructed using only the best materials and techniques

SEE COPPER FALLS | PAGE 11

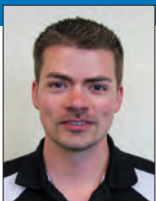
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Top quality finishing and plenty of natural light are elements found in a home built by Copper Falls Custom Homes

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

community located in one of the more popular areas of Prince George,” Scheck said.

“As the preferred builder at the Forest Park subdivision we’re working with developer Mike Mesic. We’re obviously very excited about this as it is the first time we’ve been involved in a project on this sort of scale. The plan is likely to begin construction this fall on our show home,” Stewart said.

A 60 lot development, Forest Park will offer its owners a unique strata-titled freehold property, offering distinctive views and privacy for its owners. The subdivision will feature such amenities as an illuminated entrance surrounded by landscaping, perimeter fencing, well lighted roadways, an expansive common

area and ample visitor parking. Being part of such an innovative project has become a great source of pride for Copper Falls.

“Homes constructed as part of this subdivision will include all of the extras found in all of our homes, such as the 50 year warranty on the shingles, the standard ICF foundation and a rigid insulation envelope to ensure the homes will be comfortable and as energy efficient as possible,” Stewart said.

“This project will be a great opportunity for us and as you can imagine we’re very excited about it.”

Another key part of the company’s success, and a genuine motivator for moving their individual businesses back to the region, was the area’s strong sense of community. The pair has come home not merely to work, but to live. To help make the

community a better place they have been very active in giving back to the area that has been so welcoming to them. For example the former Scheck Construction was responsible for building the last six **Spruce Kings** show homes on behalf of the local ‘Junior A’ hockey club.

Raffled as annual fund raisers the homes are a significant revenue generator for the organization and a source of pride for the community as a whole. The most recent example is a four bedroom, three bathroom energy efficient beauty valued at more than half a million dollars. The hockey team profits by selling tickets for the draw, which represents a sizable portion of its yearly operating budget.

By electing to move their businesses home to Prince George, and eventually merging their enterprises into a successful whole, Stewart and Scheck have fulfilled

a dream that they believe would not have been possible had they remained friendly rivals, or Alberta based.

“Being able to do what we’re doing now would have been a pretty interesting feat had we stayed in Alberta. There are a lot of big players there, so being able to come back here and do something like this while still being able to remain hands on and to create something where we both grew up, is pretty nice,” Stewart said.

“There’s always work in Prince George if you do good work, there’s always people looking for things to be done properly and that’s really the niche we serve. Quality builds using quality materials and quality workmanship.”

For the future Copper Falls Custom Homes anticipates continued growth as it addresses the

housing needs of its local clients, One not too distant goal for the company is to design, develop and sell a subdivision on their own, which is a possible future direction for the company.

“That’s not something that is uppermost for us. It’s not something we would do if it sacrificed quality or the sort of personal attention we provide our clients. It’s a goal we would both like to do but it’s something that’s still pretty far off for us,” Stewart said.

“We like doing things step by step. Whether its hands on with our tool belts or hands on meeting customers and doing the bids and overseeing things. It is increasingly difficult to provide that sort of personal attention if you get too big. We both realize that we’re where we’re at in this town because of what we do – if we forget that and try to get too big too fast that might be a huge step backwards.”

The perfect melding of two fully compatible companies, the joining of two like-minded business professionals, Copper Falls Custom Homes looks forward to a long history serving the community and region it calls home.

“Prince George is that happy size for us, a place where we can do what we do and take a big step forward but without having to let go of the fundamentals of what got us to where we are. It’s just the perfect place for us and our company.”

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