

BUILDINGTODAY

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS ASSOCIATION



VOLUME 25 NUMBER 5

JUNE 2015

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INSIDE:

WIGRAM FLYING HIGH

NEW MULTI-MILLION
DOLLAR BUSINESS PARK
OPENS IN WIGRAM,
CHRISTCHURCH



ALSO INSIDE:

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We also preview this year's Conference 2015 in John's home town of Hamilton. There's plenty on offer for delegates and partners, both business-wise and socially.

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Quality assurance in building

Chief's Chat

By CEO David Kelly

Concerns about the quality of building work have been raised recently in New Zealand's two biggest councils, Christchurch and Auckland.

In the case of Christchurch, that might be partly explained by the massive increase in building activity over the past few years.

We know that when there are large increases in building work, quality issues start to arise with less experienced workers entering the industry.

In the case of Auckland, while there has been an increase in building activity, it is not to the same level of that experienced in Christchurch.

But Auckland reports that it has up to 40% failure rates in inspections.

Reason for concern

There is not a lot of data on what the key issues are, but this level of failure gives reason to be concerned.

Registered Master Builders has started discussions with Auckland Council on the joint



development of a quality assurance approach.

This should allow builders who have good quality assurance processes in place a smoother ride through the consenting process.

From the council's perspective, if they have building companies that they know have good systems in place — along with a good track record of work — then they reduce the number of inspections they undertake, and are able to focus more on the builders they are worried about.

Less down time

That should, in turn, mean less down time from having to book and wait for inspections for builders who have entered the scheme.

This may not suit everyone, but it is a good initiative that we support, and hope that the Government, through the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, will also get behind the scheme.

We will need to make sure it is not over the top in the way it is designed, and that there are real benefits to builders who invest their time in taking this approach.

We will keep you informed as we make progress.



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Onwards into a new era

By RMBA president
John Macdonald

It was an historic day on May 12, 2015, when all the presidents of the 22 former Registered Master Builders Associations signed the new Registered Master Builders Trust Deed, which finally put in place the new structure of the RMBA to take us forward into a new era.

I want to thank everyone involved in the process, especially David Fabish, who has worked tirelessly to make this happen, and those on the working party, who I want to mention here: Mike Colman and Shelley Major (KPMG), Darrell Trigg, John Street, Kieran Mallon, Clive Barrington, Mark Ward, Richard Hull, Kerry Archer, Kath Kitchen, Peter Blight, Wayne Robinson and Warwick Quinn (and myself).

I read through the original proposal that we put to the RMBF Board in 2012, and these are the key components that the members wanted to retain in the new organisation:

- The original 22 local associations to remain intact.
- The RMB Guarantee.
- All RSOs (now called Regional Service Managers).
- House of the Year, Apprentice of the Year, NZ Commercial Projects Awards.
- A visible presence in the regions, such as RMBA premises.
- Local events and relationships, and local administration support to continue.

We have kept all of these, and have added crucial new elements to make the RMBA a stronger national organisation.

Here are some of the things we've delivered so far:

- A single, unified organisation that will be more credible as an industry leader.
- Established six regional hub offices with full-time support for all branches.
- A consistent national fee structure for each class of member, with no cross subsidisation.
- A centralised billing and debt collection system.
- A new IT system which will be up and running by October 2015.
- A strong financial platform.



The new structure means we are now able to deliver extra benefits to our members, which include:

- Access to legal advice, provided to members by in-house lawyer Tim Blake. Tim has just completed a road show giving valuable advice about the Building Act Amendments which were introduced on January 1, 2015.
- A fair and fast disputes resolution process, which is working really well, with very few disputes to complete.
- National membership database — our new computer software will allow us to know more about our members.
- Better communication with members — through the local branches and managers, with the president's tele-conference, and new web site.
- Administration and support for local executives.

While for some of the bigger organisations it would have been business as usual, for others you would have noticed a massive difference in the support from your local managers.

That's what the working party proposed, and as a Board and an organisation, I think we have delivered it.

What else have we achieved? As we promised, three extra RSMs, so that there is now one RSM for every 150 members.

The RMBA Board feels that these changes will take us forward into the next era, and stand us in good stead to meet the challenges of this exciting and rapidly changing industry.

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Winning apprentice has a goal to bring home a national title

Cody Webby was “breathtaken” when he was named the Auckland Registered Master Builders Carters 2014 Apprentice of the Year.

The Pakuranga-based apprentice, employed by Licensed Renovations in St Lukes, was blown away when he won the regional award, and is looking forward to competing again this year in hopes of bringing home a national title.

“When I first heard about Apprentice of the Year I thought it would be a great way to get my name out there and get exposure in the building trade,” he says.

“I want to try and make the most of every opportunity that I can.”

The judges thought Cody was a “deserving winner” last year, amongst the other very competent apprentices.

“He was well supported by his employers who spoke in glowing terms of ability, attitude and ability to work with other team members,” they said.

“Cody has a good understanding of building techniques, codes and the regulatory environment. He had a well put together entry submission, and his site visit continued the strong showing he had at the interview stage.”

While the practical component is often the most challenging part for contestants, Cody found he was strongest here.

“I knew the pressure was getting to a lot of people, but I just took a deep breath and relaxed. I didn’t want to be susceptible to the pressure, and I thought that’s just one thing that I wouldn’t let myself do.”

Having competed last year, Cody feels more than ready to give it his all in the upcoming competition.

“I know what I’m in for this time. I have a lot of support for the other trainees and my bosses. I want to bring the trophy home to Auckland, but also want to get a good name to set myself



Auckland Registered Master Builders Carters 2014 Apprentice of the Year Cody Webby.

up for the future,” he says.

“I would definitely recommend Apprentice of the Year to anyone eligible. It is an awesome way to get your name out there in the building trade. It’s a priceless experience, with everything to gain and nothing to lose.”

He is looking forward to furthering his career in the hopes of one day entering a project in the Registered Master Builders House of the Year.

Apprentices, employers and young people aspiring to be a part of the construction

industry are encouraged to join the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/apprenticeoftheyear, or follow us on Twitter at @AOY_NZ.

For more information, visit www.apprenticeoftheyear.co.nz.

Owned by the Registered Master Builders Association, the Apprentice of the Year competition is made possible thanks to principal sponsor Carters, the Building and Construction Training Organisation (BCITO), and supporting sponsor the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).



Winning wharf redevelopment a 'construction masterpiece'

It's one of Wellington's most exclusive residential addresses, known for its simple, elegant design and high quality construction, that celebrates the very best of the capital's views, sun and light from its unique position on Wellington's waterfront.

Clyde Quay Wharf — the redevelopment created by the construction team of LT McGuinness, architect firm Athfield Architects, and engineers Dunning Thornton — recently took out the top prize at the New Zealand Commercial Project Awards against 33 of the country's premium commercial properties.

Judges praised the mix of old and new in the development — which includes a number of heritage items found in the original building that were reused, such as mosaic artworks, a world clock and the original spire — as well as the way the project team collaborated with local authorities to overcome the challenges presented by redeveloping the 100-year-old wharf.

"The project team ventured into thoroughly uncharted territory, and by building strong partnerships with the regulatory authorities and a whole range of local and international experts, have delivered a superbly detailed landmark building that is more than deserving of this accolade.

"A design, engineering and construction masterpiece, this development is a fantastic enhancement to Wellington's waterfront."

The extensive 239m-long development includes 76 luxury apartments, a concierge service, a business centre with a private meeting room, a boutique fitness centre, and a 16-seat movie theatre, while at street level are offices, shops and restaurants.

An under wharf basement car park — noted as the first of its kind in Australasia — posed an immense challenge, and included 205 piles and strengthening of the existing wharf, with 28 individual, 90-tonne slabs cast above the level of high tide.

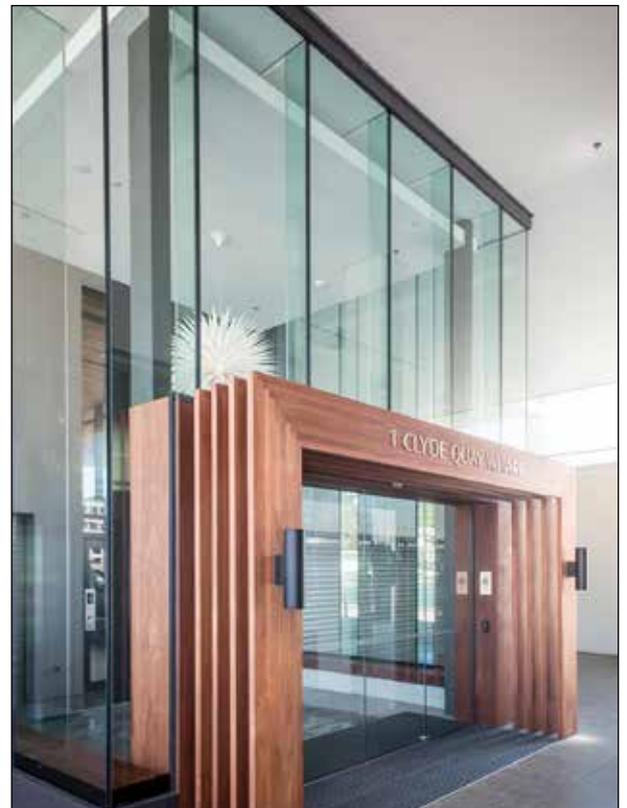
The company described it as a 24-hour operation, where all major jacking operations were dictated by tidal conditions.

As well as the supreme award, Clyde Quay also took out the Residential category award, a Gold award and the value award for top property over \$15 million.

Peter McGuinness from LT McGuinness says the team was thrilled to receive the award for the project, which demanded a "major effort from our staff and subcontractors".

"As LT McGuinness had been involved with the planning and construction of the project, the accolade of the Supreme Award was obviously a proud moment for all concerned," Mr McGuinness says.

"Despite two major earthquakes, a number of severe storms and, at times, king tides, we were able to deliver this high quality project on time and on budget."



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Self-sufficient home takes out sustainable award

It was a proud moment for Simon Crawford of Bella Homes when he found out he was the winner of the Resene Sustainable Home Award at the Registered Master Builders 2014 House of the Year.

He says he never expected to take out the award due to the amount of high quality entries out there.

“When you enter the competition you put yourself out there to be judged by your peers, so when you win an award like that it’s good to see your hard work pay off,” Mr Crawford explains.

Judges called the home very sustainable and close to being self-sufficient.

“This home was designed to maximise the spectacular view and blend with the coastal landscape,” they said.

“The entire home is clad with factory-oiled vertical shiplap cedar, and the ceilings to the upper level are lined with negative detailed plywood.

The home is solar powered, and the power the home does not consume is fed back into the main grid. Mr Crawford says the home reflected all aspects of sustainability, which helped it to stand out from others in the category.

“As well as being so sustainable, it is really well designed. The house is well positioned, well insulated, double glazed and warmed beautifully by the sun. In the middle of winter, the owners didn’t use any heating, and the house was as warm as toast,” he says.

Location played the most challenging part for the build, with tight access for the cranes carrying huge amounts of steel and concrete panels.

“The stairs were a major challenge for us. They were at maximum limit for the size of our crane, and we couldn’t get a bigger crane due to the one-way bridges,” Mr Crawford explains.

Mr Crawford says succeeding in House of the Year is a fantastic way to promote any business in the construction sector.

“You couldn’t buy advertising as good as the promotion you get winning an award. They’re extremely credible titles that people recognise.”

“House of the Year is a nationwide, recognised competition. Being associated with an award is only going to do well for a business. My phone rang hot when I won that award.”

Mr Crawford will be on the judging panel for Registered Master Builders House of the Year this year, and is looking forward to seeing the talent and quality entries in the running.

The Awards are made possible through the support of PlaceMakers, Master Build Services, James Hardie, GIB, Nulook, SafetyMate, Carters, ITM, Plumbing World, Resene, Westpac and Mitre 10.



Margie and Simon Crawford.

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It's not all about the build for this winning bathroom

It was an outstanding moment for Trevor Ward from Trevor Ward Builders when his name was read out as the winner of the Plumbing World Bathroom Excellence Award at the Registered Master Builders 2014 House of the Year.

He says it's always good to have your hard work recognised, and it was a real pat on the back for the whole team.

"A bathroom isn't just about the build," Mr Ward says. "It's about the tilers, plumbers, glass fitters and, of course, the designers. There was a fairly large team involved in this build, and they all deserved the recognition."

"Winning the Bathroom Excellence Award definitely did some good to our profile. The houses we work on are usually very high-end, and the people designing the homes like to know that the quality of work will be achieved."

Mr Ward says the "trendy" design of the bathroom was what made it really stand out, and the architects deserved a lot of recognition.

"There's a stand-alone bath with a window at the end that looks out to Lake Wakatipu — it's quite outstanding," he says.

"The shower has a glass wall that looks straight through the bedroom and out to the lake as well."

Judges were impressed by the "meticulously finished" bathroom in the Queenstown home.

"This is a bathroom fit for a king in a superb location," they said.



Sarah Vining (Plumbing World) and Trevor Ward (Trevor Ward Builders).

"This exceptional master ensuite has been masterfully designed, and the builder has produced a bathroom of outstanding quality."

"The bathing area is set slightly aside from the main functional area of the bathroom, and is set in an angular shaped section of the room, which incorporates a floor-to-ceiling window, allowing vistas of Lake Wakatipu whilst bathing."

Mr Ward says the main advantage of taking part in House of the Year is the recognition his business gained.

"It's great to be able to show people you're capable of turning out a good product, especially amongst the architects," he says.

"It's also a fantastic experience for our subcontractors — they all got a really good buzz out of winning."

Mr Ward joined Registered Master Builders for its back-up system and the Master Build Guarantees. "It's great for promoting our business. On top of that, the awards are good for anyone in the construction sector," he says.

The Awards are made possible through the support of PlaceMakers, Master Build Services, James Hardie, GIB, Nulook, SafetyMate, Carters, ITM, Plumbing World, Resene, Westpac and Mitre 10.

RMBA Conference has something for all

The Registered Master Builders Association Conference 2015 will be held at the Claudelands Conference and Exhibition Centre in Hamilton on June 2-5.

This year's conference is themed "Lest We Forget", and features as the main guest speaker Bill (Willie) Apiata, a recipient of the Victoria Cross (VC) for New Zealand.

Corporal Apiata was part of a New Zealand Special Air Service (NZSAS) Troop in Afghanistan in 2004 that was attacked by about 20 enemy fighters while camped for the night in a rural area.

Rocket-propelled grenades destroyed one of the troop's vehicles and immobilised another. Corporal Apiata was blown off the bonnet of the vehicle he had been sleeping on, while two other soldiers in or near the vehicle were wounded by shrapnel, one of them seriously.

After finding cover and assessing the soldier's injuries, Corporal Apiata carried him across 70m of exposed ground to reach the troop's main position. He then helped fight off the attackers.

Corporal Apiata received his VC on July 26, 2007, at Government House in Wellington.

RMBA president John Macdonald will present his welcome address on Friday, July 3, after which Minister for Building and Construction Nick Smith will speak.

Lively and informative workshops and business sessions will take place on the Friday and Saturday and, as has been the case regularly in past years, the RMBA has put together an outstanding programme for delegates and partners.

On Friday afternoon the ITM Welcome Function will see delegates travel to Matamata to experience the real Middle-Earth with a visit to the Hobbiton movie set, the bucolic setting for The Shire that featured in the Peter Jackson-directed films *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* trilogies.

The tour starts with a drive through the picturesque 1250 acre sheep farm with spectacular views across to the Kaimai Ranges.

Guides will escort delegates through the 12 acre site, recounting fascinating details of how the Hobbiton movie set was created.

Pre-dinner drinks will take place in The Green Dragon Inn, the meeting place for all residents of Hobbiton. An exact replica of the Green Dragon Inn, as seen in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* film trilogies, has been masterfully recreated.



Hobbiton, the venue for the ITM Welcome Function.

Right: The Claudelands Conference and Exhibition Centre in Hamilton is this year's conference venue.



Delegates will then move through to the fully-themed party marquee for a Hobbit Feast, including beverages crafted specially for Hobbiton, and entertainment by an authentic fiddler.

The PlaceMakers Gala Dinner is on at the Claudelands Conference and Exhibition Centre on Saturday night when delegates will commemorate the 100-year anniversary of Gallipoli.

The room will be transformed to mark the occasion, with military accessories and music reflective of the era.

Meanwhile, the Partners Tour features a morning tea, fashion show, wine tasting and lunch in the tranquil setting of the lush vineyard and wine cellars at the gorgeous Vilagrad Winery on Saturday.



The theme of this year's conference is "Lest We Forget", commemorating the 100-year anniversary of Gallipoli.



Corporal Bill (Willie) Apiata, a recipient of the Victoria Cross (VC) for New Zealand, is the guest speaker at this year's conference.

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New multi-million dollar business park opens in Wigram

A new multi-million-dollar light industrial, multi-use business park in Christchurch was officially launched recently.

Harvard Hub is situated just off the city's southern motorway in the heart of Wigram, just six kilometres from the Christchurch CBD.

The new commercial and business park sits alongside Christchurch's biggest residential subdivision, Wigram Skies, soon to be home to a full-size shopping centre and around 1800 homes.

Consisting of 22 stylish individual units spread over five buildings, Harvard Hub caters for a range of businesses, from service and distribution storage to trades, professional offices, light manufacturers and a cafe.

It is located near key transport links, including a new \$30m overpass linking southwest Christchurch to the central city and Blenheim Road.

The development was constructed by the Christchurch branch of award-winning South Island Registered Master Builders company Amalgamated Builders (ABL), and project managed by property investment company TPI Ltd.

TPI Ltd director Lindsey Topp, an experienced Arrowtown-based property developer, said he was "delighted" to welcome the public to Harvard Hub and open up for business.

"It's a very exciting time for this part of Christchurch as we're seeing huge growth and development supported by new transport links," he says.

"We have a good mix of businesses which offer a diverse range of services to complement the surrounding residential and commercial markets."

Businesses located at Harvard Hub include eatery and coffee shop Meshino Cafe, real estate agent Ray White Metro, cleaners Wisdom Commercial Cleaning, electrical company Safepower Service Ltd, import and packaging company World Wide Imports, communications specialists Quasar Systems Ltd, long-established southern company Foley Plumbing, growing local firm Mainland Roofing, and also the high-profile Champions of the World.

On-site car parking adds to ease of access for customers, while extensive landscaping using native species and well-lit footpaths is



Meshino Cafe at the recently-launched Harvard Hub in Wigram, Christchurch.

designed to complement the adjoining residential development.

ABL director Peter Corkery said Harvard Hub addressed a need in the area for warehouse and office space, with Meshino Cafe being the "icing on the cake" for passing commuters and on-site workers.

"From day dot, it was an enjoyable project to be part of. The process was seamless, from design stage right through to hand-over, and we're proud to put our name to it," he said.

"Wigram is on a high right now, and this development ticks all the boxes."

ABL had more than 30 tradesmen on site at Harvard Hub over the 18-month build, and is currently experiencing a period of significant growth within the Christchurch market, with several multi-million dollar commercial projects underway.

Gavin Ryan of commercial property sales and leasing specialists Glass Miles Commercial, who has been involved with Harvard Hub since its inception, supports Mr Corkery's comments, saying the improved "connectivity" of Wigram has been a selling point for investors, owner occupiers and tenants alike.

"We've seen a good number of sales, based from only the plans, which was extremely encouraging at the start of the design phase," he said.

"The new 'Landing' retail precinct in the adjoining Wigram Skies residential development, the Christchurch City Council-inspired new flyover link currently under construction, and the Harvard Hub development itself will see a transition of people moving west. Wigram will become the new Sydenham."

Mr Ryan has signed a number of leases and agreements with a range of owner-occupiers and investors, with some tenants signing up for a seven-year initial lease period.

He is now experiencing strong interest in the four remaining first-floor units still available for sale or lease.

"For office occupiers, it isn't always ideal to show them around a busy building site, so we've been lucky enough to be able show them a unit on Blenheim Road, adjacent to the ABL offices.

"This complex was also built by ABL and designed by DD Architects — the Harvard Hub designers — which has been very helpful during the sales and leasing process.

"We've received extremely positive feedback. Owners and tenants like the separate pod designs, which provide a trade access at the back and customer/client access from the front. They're delighted to see that the units also boast plentiful natural light, great access and, of course, the on-site cafe."

Construction company giving students learning opportunities

Construction company Hawkes Bay Project Management has partnered with the tertiary organisation Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT) to provide school students with a pathway into the construction industry.

On site and under mentorship from company owner John Roil, a group of 14 Year 13 students from local secondary schools will be building a one-bedroom property. This allows them to earn sector-related credits, making their learning relevant to an industry and preparing them for work.

"The skills they are learning are a starting point for their careers in construction," Mr Roil says.

"It's incredible to see those kids begin with a block of wood and end up with a completed building. It's giving them skills they can use anywhere in New Zealand," he says.

"This country needs construction workers, especially in Christchurch and Auckland."

Mr Roil says creating a path for young people to follow is integral to education, and he sees his involvement as a community responsibility.

"What we're doing is helping young Kiwis with career progression. Students are fulfilling a cadetship, which can become an apprenticeship and then, with higher qualifications, can lead to management.

"The more influence on this process from the world outside formal

education, for instance, from business, the better."

EIT also offers construction pathways to school leavers, and experience like this will make the transition to further study in this industry more achievable.

Mr Roil also sees the benefit of this young and skilled workforce to the Hawkes Bay economy. From a social perspective, this former teacher, builder, mentor and Hastings District Councillor says education and work opportunities are the key to lifting the aspirations of young people.

Mr Roil's company specialises in prefabricated buildings. He delivers prefabricated police stations to rural areas of New Zealand, and came to the attention of EIT when he won the Supreme Award at the Hawkes Bay Chamber of Commerce business awards.

EIT saw assembling kitset buildings as a challenge for their students, and asked Mr Roil if he would be involved.

He saw the project as an ideal opportunity to combine his passions of teaching and building. He agreed, and has mentored and facilitated the programme where the EIT Trades Academy and tertiary students construct a range of prefabricated buildings.

The buildings are then sold to the Ministry of Education for use as classrooms, early childhood centres or offices.

EIT business relationship and trades academy manager Paul Hursthouse says from his perspective, satisfaction is measured by the students' engagement, motivation, achievement and, ultimately, their success. "And so far, the students are loving it," he says.

Arthur Graves, the Ministry of Education's group manager for youth guarantee, says this sort of collaboration between business and education will ensure that school leavers are highly skilled and "work ready".

"Relevancy in education is crucial, and can only be achieved when industry is actively involved in supporting curriculum decisions," Mr Graves says.

"We are encouraging businesses and schools to source similar partnerships around the country. Learning happens both inside and outside of the traditional classroom."

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Framing a house are, from left: Giovanni Jacobs, Michael Paul and Jayden Bartlett, all from Hastings Boys High School.



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For the first time ever, the largest event dedicated to workplace safety is co-located with the iconic buildnz designex duo.

Sales and events director Tony Waite says with 250+ specialist companies from throughout New Zealand and around the world coming together in one place to exhibit to more than 6000 visitors, it's vital that industry professionals attend the show at the ASB Showgrounds on June 21 to 23.

There are very good business reasons to register now to attend this major event, that features a comprehensive programme of free professional development seminars, including international keynote speakers, special features, networking opportunities, show-only specials, and the opportunity to win a huge array of prizes (including a Ford Ranger XLT Ute).

As well as that, the seminars contribute to LBP skills maintenance points, with one hour of learning equalling one LBP point.

Among the exhibitors is German company OrbisWill. International sales manager Dominik Einhaus says visitors to their stand will be surprised.

"Making your way to booth 350E will give you the possibility of connecting to our level of expertise when it comes to the professional usage of pliers. Discover life testing of our products, introduction to our manufacturing standard and quality assurances, showcasing of our most innovative product lines patented by OrbisWill, as well as networking. Don't miss the chance of getting in touch with us, because you can also win a limited and buildnz-only set of pliers made by OrbisWill."

Used for thousands of years, clay remains the most sustainable solution for modern buildings. Its natural properties means it provides complete long-term sustainability, and increasingly sophisticated low-carbon product manufacture, giving a building life of more than 150 years with little or no maintenance.

That all means another European product at buildnz designex that will be of interest to many is the range from the largest producer of clay building materials worldwide, Wienerberger, as showcased by Stellaria NZ Ltd.

Visitors will be able to get hands-on with the seismic resistant Porotherm Clay Block Walling System, the broad range of more than 100 models of Koramic Clay Roofing Tiles in an extensive array of colours, and Terca Clay Facing Bricks, which combine aesthetics, tradition and innovation, incorporating a wide range of design options through the range of diverse colours, shapes and surface structures.

Among the hundreds of exhibitors at buildnz designex is one that helps the industry in a different way, says CertMark International certification team member Sammy Fowler.

"We're a family-owned business with a head office on Queensland's Sunshine Coast. We have a number of specialists on our team located in Australia, New Zealand, Asia, Europe, United Kingdom and the United States.

"Our free, no-obligation, initial assessment allows our team members to discuss with you the certification or services that best suit the needs of your organisation. We also offer service in management systems, supplier assessment, scope of testing, assessment briefs and our environmental technology verification called Future Friendly."

buildnz designex and the National Safety Show is a trade-only event, with free entry for those that register online at www.buildnz.com.



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BT's Back in Time

20 years ago:

- The Gulf Harbour development on the Whangaparaoa Peninsula just north of Auckland was experiencing a huge boost thanks to Team New Zealand's America's Cup win.

The 970-berth Gulf Harbour marina, one of the largest and best-equipped of its kind in Australasia, was named as the likely host of one or more of the Cup syndicates in 1999-2000.

Meanwhile, work forged ahead on the 320ha of rolling pastureland and clifftops around the marina, which was being transformed into a residential settlement of around 7000 people, living in more than 2500 houses.

15 years ago:

- The centralisation of the administrative activities of all Registered Master Builders Associations was all but complete, with only the Tauranga association yet to have the Federation undertake its admin.

Federation business development officer Steve Robinson said the Regional Service Officer (RSO) and Regional Service Manager (RSM) field officer concept — part of the centralisation process — was working well.

"It was popular from the outset, and feedback from members is ever more positive. It's all about keeping our members informed about the most recent developments, materials and practices. It's really proving to be an all-round success," Mr Robinson said.

10 years ago:

- The Registered Master Builders Federation planned to extend its awards in the 2005 House of the Year and Commercial Awards programme to include a Registered Master Builder of the Year award for both residential and commercial categories.

RMBF president Mike Fox said the move would place a greater emphasis on the builders behind the buildings.

"These awards will recognise member companies that epitomise the skills, values and attributes of a registered master builder in residential and commercial building," he said.

"Up to now the awards have focused on the winning building, overshadowing the team of builders behind the project. We want to make sure the people are recognised too."

5 years ago:

- Work was well underway on the restoration of 19th Century warehouses Stanbeth House and Excelsior House, the next two buildings in the Britomart heritage restoration programme in central Auckland.

Cooper and Company began renovating the buildings in January 2010, and expected both to be completed by September 2010.

The buildings, which stand adjacent to each other on Customs Street East, and which both date back to around 1885, were being fully restored in consultation with heritage architects Salmond Reed.

The completion of the two buildings were to have brought to eight the number of historical buildings at Britomart fully refurbished by Cooper and Company.

These included the Central Post Office, the Northern Steamship Building, the Levy Building, the Maritime Building and Charter House.

The logo for PlaceMakers, featuring the brand name in a white sans-serif font with a blue and red underline, set against a dark blue background.

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What's going on with shrinking timber weatherboard?

Building Today columnist and industry stalwart Mike Fox talks candidly about issues concerning the New Zealand construction industry.

With the swing away from monolithic claddings towards more traditional-looking homes and claddings, finger-jointed timber weatherboard manufacturers have probably never had it better.

However, personal experience has led me to realise timber weatherboards potentially have their own set of issues.

In the past 24 months, on no less than five separate occasions, we have personally experienced severe shrinkage problems with pre-primed pine weatherboards. All of these have resulted in expensive repaints with varying degrees of success.

In addition to this, there have been many boards that leach out sap which also need rectification work.

Obviously this is a worrying pattern, so I decided to seek assistance from the manufacturers, and this is where it gets interesting — or, might I say, disappointing.

Our painter, who completes more new exteriors than most for a variety of builders, shared with me that we are not experiencing this problem alone, and that these are certainly not isolated cases.

The problem may well be more widespread than it first seems, and it would be useful to get some feedback on the extent of the issue.

The homes in question here are in different locations, have different designs, different carpenters, different colour schemes, different painters and paint manufacturers, and they were also built at different times of the year.

The only common factor between all the projects was the substrate which, in all cases, was pine pre-primed, finger-jointed, bevelled-backed weatherboard, albeit from two manufacturers.

The other consistent factor is that neither of the timber weatherboard manufacturers have had any interest in resolving the issue other than blaming the builder, the weather, the painters or the paint manufacturers — anyone but themselves.

One manufacturer's representative went further to say that it was a race to the bottom price for supplying the board, and that, ideally, all board should be double-primed at the time of manufacture, but it would make their product more expensive.

By not doing this or improving the product,



Mike Fox

they push the problem of shrinking boards on to the unwitting builder and consumer.

Ironically, the eventual outcome of ignoring the problem will be a march away from their product. No builder wants to use a product that gives them or their client issues, and unless this problem is resolved at source they will vote with their feet. It is naive for a manufacturer to expect anything else.

Another builder I spoke to who had also been having board shrinkage problems fitted some of the acclaimed double-primed boards to see if this would make a difference.

The outcome on this project was a similar result — board shrinking during the summer months leaving a visible line of undercoat, and then the board swelling back somewhat in the winter months. So much for that theory, and this builder now will not use timber weatherboard.

One weatherboard manufacturer visited one of the sites in question and quickly walked away, saying it was our problem. What great PR, and just what a builder wants to hear. We go out of our way to make sure their product does not now get specified.

Another manufacturer decided to take samples of their product and said it was the paint that was at issue. We had the paint manufacturer do their own inspections, and they said it was the weatherboard at fault — so where does that leave the builder and home owner? — once again flapping in the wind with an expensive problem they haven't necessarily created but are now having to resolve.

So what is going on here? It would appear that, anecdotally, pre-primed, finger-jointed board may not be the product it used to be.

Is it that the profile is now smaller and the timber less seasoned? Is the timber of lesser quality or the undercoat thinner? Should the board be painted before installation? Should the board be fitted at the height of summer only?

I don't know the answers to these questions, but it appears the product has become more precious than it used to be and, unless you are very careful with its installation, you may well be up for an expensive repaint within 12 months.

Given the financial risk associated and the manufacturers' "don't call us" attitude to the problem, we have taken the following pragmatic steps to avoid having issues with pre-primed weatherboard:

- Those projects that were already under construction have had an additional coat of the final colour applied to the face of the board before it is installed. This doesn't stop the shrinkage but it does disguise the shrinkage line when the board pulls back at the height of summer.
- Sales consultants have been instructed to inform clients about the shrinkage risks of using timber weatherboard and, if the client still wishes to use it, it is documented that it is at their own risk. Not ideal at all.
- We have completely migrated away from using or recommending the product on future projects until proven preventative remedies and accountability have been identified. We just can't afford the financial or reputational risk as it has become abundantly clear you are on your own if a problem occurs.

Because of the way the law operates in New Zealand, builders who supply products end up guaranteeing those products, even when a manufacturer walks away or is not there to assist.

If the leaky building saga has taught us anything, it is to make sure that products are fit for purpose and that they are backed by solid and responsible manufacturers.

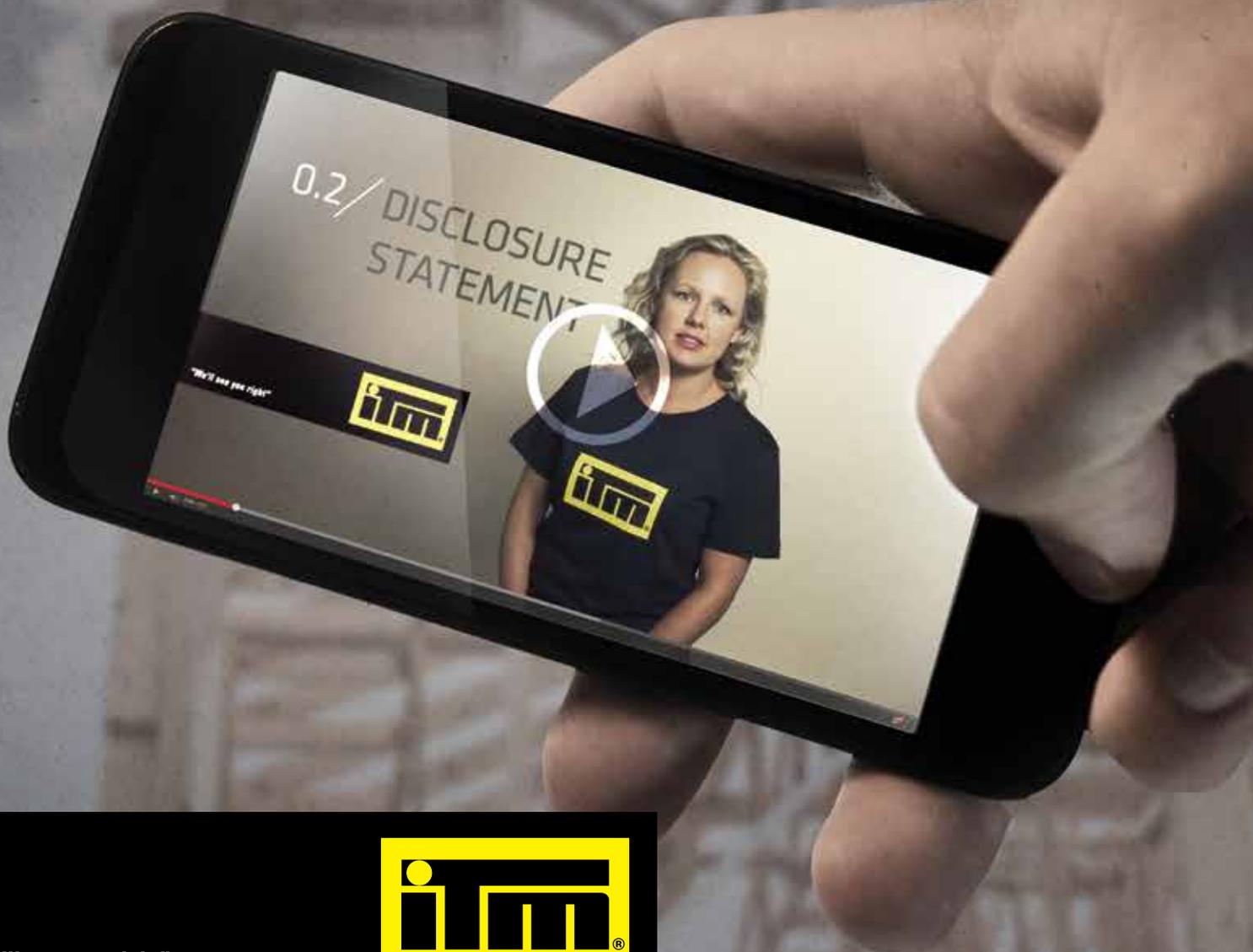
Unfortunately, it has proven far too easy to blame the builder and get away with it. The builder often fixes problems with marginal product rather than battle tardy manufacturers.

Accordingly, I would recommend you are very careful with the products you recommend and use. Ask yourself the following — will these products stand the test of time, and will I get assistance if they fail prematurely? If you can't answer those questions affirmatively, don't use the product.

• This article contains the author's opinion only, and is not necessarily the opinion of the Registered Master Builders Association, its chief executive or staff.

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We've made a series of short, simple, easy to follow videos to help you understand what's expected of builders under the building act. You can watch them on your phone over smoko. Go to itm.co.nz/bac



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Got a trade? Got it made



Got a Trade Week 2015 — being held from August 21-28 — is part of a nationwide campaign to raise awareness of workplace qualifications among job seekers, their teachers and parents.

There's no doubt that New Zealand needs more skilled tradespeople than ever before.

The 2014 Talent Shortage Survey, produced by Manpower Group, showed that engineers, technicians and skilled trades feature among the top-five jobs employers have difficulty filling across Asia-Pacific.

Globally, skilled trades are the highest in demand.

Got a Trade Week 2015 aims to enhance public perception of training and career prospects in New Zealand's service and trade industries by getting up close and

personal with modern-day apprentices and trainees, and the companies that employ them.

Their stories will inspire and encourage conversations at home, at school and in the workplace.

Got a Trade Week 2015 brings to life the needs and aspirations of young New Zealanders trying to find where they fit in the world.

It will also show the sense of pride that comes from acquiring new skills and qualifications on the job.

A comprehensive digital strategy will be supported by an official launch, as well as targeted advertising, media coverage and direct marketing.

Public and media events

The inaugural Got a Trade Week 2015 is a national programme of public and media events that celebrate the talent and achievements of trade apprentices and trainees.

Launched at the 2014 Careers Expo, the Got a trade? Got it made campaign is the collaborative brainchild of seven Industry Training Organisations – BCITO, Competenz, Connexis, HITO, MITO, Service IQ and The Skills Organisation.

As part of Got a Trade Week 2015, the BCITO Got a Trade Day is taking place on Thursday, August 27, when the BCITO's 14 regional teams will be joining with local industry and employers to host career seekers at a number of construction-related facilities and locations.

Visit www.gotatradegotitmade.co.nz to find out more.

Next month:

Carpentry apprentice Cody Webby's got it made — just one of the stories that the BCITO is sharing as part of the Got a trade? Got it made campaign.

BCITO
building people

My Secret to Training Legendary Apprentices...

As our industry grows, along with the demand for skilled trades, it's our job as employers to get the right people trained up and ready to make a difference.

Since starting my own business at age 30, I've been passionate about training. I wanted someone young and fresh to help me out; who would grow to become a valuable member of both my team and the construction industry. So I took on an apprentice through the BCITO.

Seven years and six apprentices later, I'm reaping the benefits.

Not only do I now have a team of guys with the skills that my business needs, but I've got some great mates to work with too.

Finding the right apprentice isn't easy, but once you've found someone you can get along well with, is eager to learn and not afraid of a bit of hard work, you're sorted.

It's then up to you to mentor that person until they've got the skills you both need.

At the beginning, it's all about investing your time, skills and energy. Being a good mentor means giving your apprentices a chance to excel and pushing them to be their best.

Seeing the potential isn't enough; you have to provide opportunities for your apprentice to reach that potential.

After a couple of years of training and hard work, they hit that magic moment and all of a sudden you've created a fully competent tradesperson.

Through training apprentices, I've had excellent opportunities to foster great talent. One of my first apprentices, Willie de Gruchy, went on to win the Auckland 2013 House of the Year. Bill Harkness (pictured), who's still working with me now, won the RMB Carters Apprentice of the Year title in 2013.

I'm so proud of what these guys have achieved, and it's so rewarding to know I have been a part of their career.

The bottom line is that there aren't any downsides to supporting your apprentices to be their best. When your apprentices succeed, so does your business. Who wouldn't want a top class tradesman to work alongside everyday?

For me, training apprentices just makes sense.

Ben Redmond
Redmond Builders & Construction

BCITO building people
If you reckon Ben knows what he's talking about and you want to get involved with training **CALL THE BCITO ON 0800 422 486.** We may even be able to help find you the right apprentice.

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ZX33U-5 / ZX38U-5 / ZX48U-5 / ZX55U-5 / ZX65USB-5

SPECIFICATIONS

MAKE	MODEL	WEIGHT kg	WIDTH Blade mm	BUCKET m ³	DIG DEPTH mm	BREAKOUT kgf	POWER hp @ rpm	FLOW L/min
Hitachi	ZAXIS 17U-5	1880	980/1280	0.044	2190	1630	14.4 @ 2400	2 x 19.2
Hitachi	ZAXIS 26U-5	2570	1500	0.06	2590	2300	19.7 @ 2200	2 x 35.2/ 1 x 17.6
Hitachi	ZAXIS 33U-5	3510	1550	0.11	3130	2770	28.4 @ 2400	2 x 38.4/ 1 x 22.8
Hitachi	ZAXIS 38U-5	3960	1740	0.11	3460	2760	28.4 @ 2400	2 x 38.4/ 1 x 22.8
Hitachi	ZAXIS 48U-5	4900	1960	0.13	3630	3270	37.8 @ 2400	120
Hitachi	ZAXIS 55U-5	5210	2000	0.13	3830	3760	37.8 @ 2400	120
Hitachi	ZAXIS 65USB-5	6470	2000	0.18	4120	4190	45.7 @ 2000	144

See first-hand the features of the new Hitachi ZX17U-5 & ZX26U-5 excavators with live demonstrations taking place throughout the country. For more information and to register visit www.cableprice.co.nz or contact your local CablePrice sales representative.

Models shown are for illustration purposes only and may or may not include options available in New Zealand. Weights noted are for cabin units. (Excludes ZX17U-5 and ZX26U-5)

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The energy smart home — how renovating with solar can save you money

As property prices continue to increase, more home owners are choosing to renovate, and experts say if they include solar in their plans they should be able to save thousands.

With the introduction of solarZero, a first-of-its-kind \$0 down solar power plan, the ability to go solar and save money on power is now firmly within reach of all Kiwi home owners.

Launched by leading solar power company, solarcity, home builders and renovators can now have solar panels installed on their roof without having to pay for the panels or installation.

“Our new solarZero plan is the first of its kind in New Zealand, and allows Kiwis to generate clean power at a fixed price for solar power, which is lower than traditional electricity,” according to solarcity founder and chief executive Andrew Booth.

“\$0 down means they can incorporate solar without increasing the cost of their build/renovation. They no longer have to choose between helping the environment/creating an

energy efficient home and sticking to their building or renovation budget.”

For the best results during building/renovations, solarcity recommends involving solar experts in the initial planning. This will help identify how many solar panels are needed to power the house and what direction they should face.

Solar panels, mounting hardware, cables and an inverter (or controller) will then be connected to the roof, which can be completed

within a day. Planning installation as part of a new build or renovation ensures a clean seamless install without the need for external cables to run down the outside of the house.

“solarZero ticks a lot of boxes for home builders and renovators — you can achieve a higher HomeStar rating, reduce your household spend and contribute to a sustainable future for the next generation,” Mr Booth says.

About solarcity:

Solarcity has put more solar systems on New Zealand homes over the past 30 years than any other. It is also one of the top five fastest-growing green companies in New Zealand, and is one of the Government’s Focus 500 companies, targeted to contribute significant benefits to the New Zealand economy.

It was the first solar company in the world to achieve CarboNZero accreditation.

For more information, visit www.solarcity.co.nz.

Home Health Check Month helps Kiwis stay warm and save money

It’s easy to make homes warmer, healthier and more energy efficient during the cold winter months — and some quick fixes won’t cost a cent.

Running throughout June, Home Health Check Month offers four weeks of research-based fast facts and smart tips to help people improve home performance in four areas: energy, health and comfort, water efficiency, waste, and home safety.

People will also have the chance to win prizes and get expert answers to home-performance questions.

The month-long campaign is presented by the New Zealand Green Building Council (NZGBC), which manages Homestar, the rating tool for New Zealand homes.

Homestar is an independent system that rates the health, comfort and energy efficiency of New Zealand homes on a scale of 1 to 10. A 6 Homestar rating or higher gives assurance that a home will be warmer, healthier and cost less to run than a typical new home built to

Building Code standard (which achieves a 3 or 4 Homestar rating).

NZGBC chief executive Alex Cutler says the aim of Home Health Check Month is to raise home owners’ awareness of what it means to have a healthy home, and the many simple ways they can improve warmth, efficiency and environmental impact, and reduce day-to-day household costs.

“Building or renovating is obviously the easiest time to ensure you have a healthy, energy-efficient house,” Ms Cutler says.

“But there’s an awful lot you can do to upgrade and improve your home — not only making it warmer and healthier, but reducing household bills too.

“For example, choosing energy-efficient LED bulbs helps the energy savings add up, and fitting flow restrictors to taps and showerheads will reduce your water use and hot water bill. Many of these changes cost a little, and offer great rewards.

“During Home Health Check Month we’ll share tips on reducing environmental impact too — such as reducing waste and water use. The safety and livability of our homes is also important, so we’re including factors such as reducing hazards around the home and ensuring good accessibility.

“In general, we’re aiming to inform, inspire and prompt some positive action. The overall message of the month is, ‘Take a look at how your home stacks up — and here are a few simple steps to make it better!’”

Homestar also offers a self-assessment tool for home owners to check how they rate on the Homestar scale and get a customised report. Ms Cutler says a good first step for an over-arching look at home performance is to check out the tool at www.homestar.org.nz.

People can keep up with Home Health Check Month tips and advice through the Homestar Facebook page at www.facebook.com/Homestarnz, and the Homestar web site at www.homestar.org.nz.

Energy-efficient show home reopens in Jack's Point

Award-winning Registered Master Builders Association company Rilean Construction has re-opened its first-ever energy-efficient "Evolution Series" show home near Queenstown as substantial demand for sustainable living continues to grow.

The show home opened at the popular Jack's Point lifestyle development recently, and displays many features of sustainable living and environmentally-responsible building methods.

Designed by Rilean-appointed architect Mark Gray, the four-bedroom, two-bathroom home at 9 McKellar Drive spans 225sq m, and is located in a sunny north-west facing position within the spectacular development, overlooked by The Remarkables mountain range.

The Evolution Series team is thrilled to re-open the home to the public, which first opened its doors in June 2014, enabling them to once again showcase what an energy-efficient home should look and feel like.

"We're lucky the owners have allowed us to use it as a show home again for six months while they live overseas," Rilean Construction director and shareholder Mick Moffatt says.

"It's perfect timing really, as we're now in winter and starting to feel the occasional morning frost. Even in our harsh Central Otago climate, stepping into this warm, sunny home really encapsulates what an evolution home is all about. The heat retention level is amazing.

"An energy-efficient home passively creates and retains warmth, reducing the need for other forms of heating."

Mr Moffatt says buyers and potential buyers were increasingly keen on building sustainable homes, not only for environmental but financial reasons.

The recent Queenstown Home Show resulted in two new contracts and numerous enquiries, as the Evolution Series concept continues to grow.

"Since 2011 we've built 17 homes, and we currently have 13 more at the design stage or in the process of being built," he says.

"To put that into context, we only built two homes in our first year when the concept was new to Queenstown, but since then growth has been spectacular, as people have come to

realise the savings they can make while being kind to the environment.

"People have a genuine desire to learn more about their options for sustainable living, to be warmer and healthier, while at the same time knowing they have a great-value investment which will help save money in the long run."

All evolution homes are monitored for energy efficiency post-construction, and all are performing better than expected.

"One home's using approximately \$1200 per year for electricity, including heating and hot water, which is incredibly good for this area,"

Mr Moffatt says.

Rilean pioneered sustainable and energy-efficient home building when it launched the evolution series in late 2010, and it continues to exceed expectations.

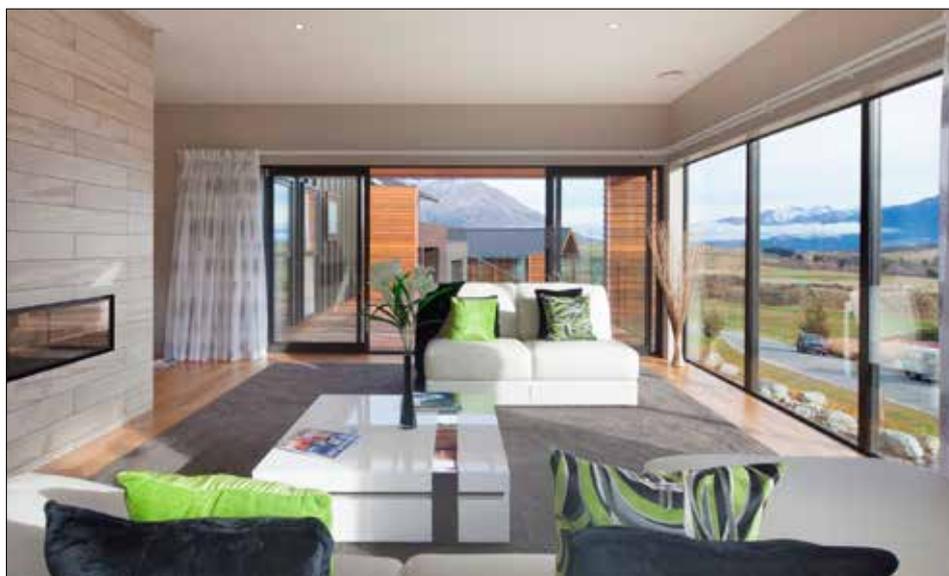
Jack's Point is proving a popular choice for energy-efficient home owners, with four being built or underway in the next six months.

Also in progress are homes in Moeraki and Wanaka, with Wanaka welcoming an additional nine cottage-style Evolution Series homes at the Kirimoko Park development.



Above: The black designer Palazzo kitchen is a feature of the open plan kitchen and dining area.

Below: The open plan living area opens on to a spacious balcony overlooking the mountains.



NZ company a world leader in level correction



Level correction is often thought of as a time-consuming process and regularly creating a substantial mess, both in and around the structure being re-levelled.

Not so with Mainmark Ground Engineering, who specialise in non-invasive, non-disruptive technologies that can be applied to a variety of problems, from minor structure subsidence to level correction of an entire building.

The company leads the world in developing the most advanced and accurate technologies, in particular techniques such as the Uretek Resin and JOG injection methods.

Mainmark has a strong and proven history,

trusted worldwide for more than 30 years, delivering results to thousands of projects in New Zealand, Australia, Japan and Thailand.

Previously trading as Uretek, Mainmark has operated in New Zealand for more than 15 years, successfully re-levelling more than 1000 local residential and non-residential projects.

Most recently, Mainmark New Zealand has helped hundreds of Christchurch homes and buildings get back to level, including the Christchurch Art Gallery.

The company's methods are time efficient, with projects ranging from a day to a few weeks. Solutions are also cost effective, with little, if

any, disruption to the building or landscaping.

Furthermore, Mainmark's technologies have the additional benefit of strengthening the ground (at varying depths), whilst having zero negative impact on the environment.

Methods are suited to projects of any size — no job is too small or too large.

Staff (more than 70 in New Zealand), have a wealth of experience in the residential, commercial and infrastructure markets.

Mainmark New Zealand has offices in Christchurch and Auckland, with skilled teams and specialised equipment rigs travelling nationwide.



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Enjoy long-term benefits by installing bottom plate packers

By John Oliver, Hiandri Solutions Ltd

Winter is at the front door, which means saturated bottom plates, and just about having to take your flippers so you can work on flooded floors. But both problems can be solved by installing Hiandri bottom plate packers.

There are great economic reasons for doing so – after all, time is money — but there are also important long-term benefits when using the Hiandri system other than those experienced during construction.

Although the system does not stop leaks, it manages moisture and prevents timber from rotting. Currently, any moisture entering the framing goes to the bottom plate which

becomes saturated, especially with a damp proof course holding the moisture in the timber. As the leak continues, the bottom of the studs become saturated, and the end result is an expensive repair bill.

Compare that with the new Hiandri system. Any moisture entering the framing for the life of the building, for whatever reason, can now run down the framing timber and drain, because the timber cannot become saturated.

When the moisture reaches the bottom plate, it drips 12mm onto the floor and either goes outside the building and does not cause a problem. Or, alternatively, it goes inside, providing an early warning system that you do have a problem, and one that cannot be ignored.

However, the problem will never be larger than the size of a dinner plate, because you have air

circulating around the plate — it is just simple common sense. And the chance of the builder ever being involved in litigation for rotting frames is remote.

I installed Hiandri bottom plate packers on an engineer's home in Hamilton eight years ago. A few months ago I called him for a testimonial, which he was delighted to give.

He then told me his ensuite shower had been leaking for eight years, and he had been unable to resolve it. He then proceeded to show me a nail through the cold water feed under the laundry bench, which had also been leaking for eight years.

Under normal circumstances, this home owner would be facing a huge repair bill for rotting frames, but that was completely avoided by his decision to install Hiandri bottom plate packers.

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PASS your pre-line moisture test with

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www.hiandri.com
and request a sample pack



"Raising the building industry to a new level!"

Relief from CCA 2002 'Pay now argue later' provisions

Timothy Bates, principal of Auckland law firm Legal Vision, reviews the recent decision of *Brussell Construction Ltd v Manchester Industrial Holdings Ltd*.

This is a decision where, despite a contractor having seemingly won the battle of compliance with the strict provisions of the Construction Contracts Act 2002, the court, in the context of an application to stay liquidation proceedings, was prepared to provide relief from "pay now argue later" provisions of the Construction Contracts Act 2002.

Background

Brussell was a contractor who contracted to carry out building renovations to a property owned by Manchester. The dispute emerged once the sixth payment claim was issued on April 1, 2013.

It was contended by Manchester that the payment claim did not appear to correlate with the work actually performed. Manchester asked questions that were never addressed by Brussell, it then terminated the building contract and engaged another company to complete the work.

Manchester contended that 80% of Brussell's work needed to be demolished and rebuilt. It also alleged that it had used unqualified workers who did not follow proper building methodology. A number of defects in the work were identified.

Brussell issued a further payment claim on April 13, 2013, seeking \$17,000. Manchester sent an email in response, disputing this payment claim on April 17, 2013, but also seeking all materials invoices. It was noted in that email that any payment schedule issued would show a nil amount owing.

There was no response from Brussell for more than a year. On July 31, 2014, it eventually issued a payment claim for \$46,000 covering all work carried out at the property between



November 26, 2012, and April 2013.

Manchester, in turn, replied, asserting that the payment claim was disputed and that the payment schedule amount owed was nil. Brussell then issued a statutory demand for the full amount of the payment claim — the rationale being, no doubt, that the response by Manchester did not constitute a payment schedule, rendering the amount claimed in the payment claim a debt that was due and owing.

Adjudication proceedings were initiated on this basis. These were defended by Manchester, asserting that the payment claim was invalid as it did not identify the work for which it was claiming.

Brussell was ultimately successful in the adjudication proceedings, as it was ruled that, in fact, the payment claim was valid, and that Manchester had failed to serve a valid payment schedule.

Liquidation proceedings had been issued prior to the determination of the adjudication. The issue that Manchester asked the High Court to determine was whether the liquidation proceeding ought to be stayed pending Manchester bringing a judicial review application in respect of the adjudication determination.

In support of Manchester's application to stay the liquidation proceeding, it:

- argued the debt upon which the liquidation claim was based was genuinely disputed, the payment claim being invalid,
- asserted that if it was ultimately successful as against Brussell in its judicial review proceedings, Brussell would not be able to refund the \$46,000 sought, and
- had deposited \$46,000 into an independent

solicitor's trust account pending the determination of the judicial review.

The court was assisted by the judgment of Associate Judge Bell in *Kariiti v Donovan Drainage & Earth Moving*, where he held that a payer can persuade a court to relieve it from the enforcement of its obligations under sections 23, 24 and 59 of the Construction Contracts Act 2002 where:

- there is a high degree of likelihood that the payee will not be able to repay if a determination after a dispute resolution procedure under s26(1) goes in the payer's favour, and
- that it has a good arguable case that it will succeed in the dispute resolution procedure under s26(1).

The court ruled on the evidence presented as to the financial capability of Brussell to repay the sum of \$46,000. It was unlikely that it would be able to refund these monies if paid out to it, prior to determination of the judicial review proceeding.

It did go on to say that the Associate Judge Bell had set the test at too high a level when he suggested "a high degree of likelihood of not being able to repay" was necessary to meet this first requirement.

The court also ruled that Manchester had a reasonable argument that a valid payment claim had not been submitted, thus meaning that the "pay now argue later" provisions may not come into effect.

More fundamentally, it ruled that there was ample evidence that there were defects in the work performed by Brussell at the property, specifically referencing the allegation that 80% of the work complete now had to be redone. The liquidation proceeding was accordingly stayed.

This decision is important because it does establish some limited instances where the court will provide relief as against the strict application of the "pay now argue later" enforcement provisions of the Construction Contracts Act 2002.

Note: This article is not intended to be legal advice (nor a substitute for legal advice). No responsibility or liability is accepted by Legal Vision or *Building Today* to anyone who relies on the information contained in this article.

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Speaking Frankly

Architect Don Bunting reflects on a 20th Century architectural icon, and some recent issues affecting today's design and construction industry.

2015 represents 100 years since the last of Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie-style homes.

Constructed in the Chicago suburb of Rogers Park, the Bach House is not well known today. For most architectural historians, Wright's Prairie period culminated five years earlier with the completion of the better known Robie House.

The 2012 refurbishment of the Bach House by Tawani Enterprises is an example of "only in America".

The work was funded by James Pritzker, a member of the family founding the Hyatt Hotel chain. Patronage by wealthy individuals and families — preserving important individual properties, funding libraries and art galleries, and making large bequests to universities — is almost uniquely American.

American-style patronage sometimes extends outside the borders of the USA. During the refurbishment of the British Museum's Great Court in London, designed by Norman Foster, the information centre was funded by US philanthropist and publisher Walter Annenberg. Annenberg later donated his US\$1 billion art collection to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

American institutions would struggle to survive without patronage by wealthy individuals and family trusts.

1915 was a critical year for Wright, dealing with the aftermath of the death of his mistress Mrs Cheney and her family in August 1914 in a tragic fire at Taliesin in Wisconsin.

Taliesin was completely rebuilt by Wright during 1915. Pieces of crockery from his extensive collection of Japanese porcelain can be seen today, built into the new building's walls — a poignant reminder of his loss.

It was very much the end of an era for Frank Lloyd Wright, before he moved on to design his string of Californian homes, most using his unique interlocking concrete block construction.

One of these concrete block homes, the Ennis House, inspired the key interior sets for the Sci-Fi film *Bladerunner*.

Wright's best known buildings were still to come — in particular "Falling Water" (the Kaufman House) in Pennsylvania, his winter

home Taliesin West in Scottsdale, built in 1937, and the first (that is pre-Geary's Bilbao) Guggenheim Museum in New York.

Falling Water was built in 1935, and the Guggenheim Museum was completed just after Wright's death in 1959.

The Robie House

Saved from demolition in the 1950s by Wright's own impassioned intervention, the house is recognised as the most complete embodiment of his Prairie Style. Extensive decks accentuate the horizontal form as well as shielding the occupants from the busy suburban streets.

The brickwork, with its raked horizontal joints, adds to the horizontal look. Downpipes were also omitted for the same reason, with rainwater cascading from eaves gutters to drainage outlets on the decks below.

The house was renowned for its extensive use of art glass (leaded glass in strong geometric patterns), and for the fine, fretwork wooden panels used to diffuse and conceal the ceiling lights.

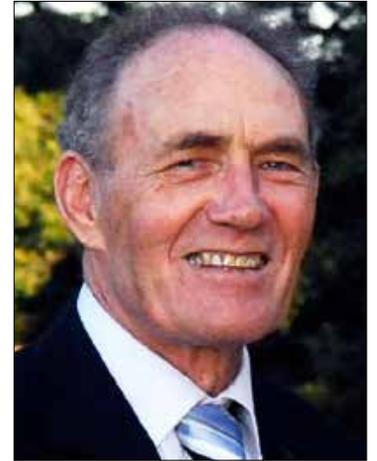
Robie was a car enthusiast, and the large, adjoining garage and courtyard is now a visitor's centre and bookshop. Like a number of Wright's clients, Robie later suffered from business and marital problems, and the house was only occupied as a residence for some 16 years.

Speaking very frankly

What is wrong with our industry? Recent reports on faulty, below-strength concrete being supplied to 70 building suites in Auckland during April is a serious indictment on both the concrete supply industry and the contractors on the sites involved.

It is also a sad reflection on the level of testing being carried out at both ends of the supply chain.

I know times have changed, but this highlights how far our industry has fallen below standards prior to 1970, where a clerk of works and/or a site engineer would not have let below-strength concrete slip through. This is taking us back to third world standards and must not be allowed to happen again.



A profession under pressure

I see that the New Zealand Institute of Architects (NZIA) — of which I remain a proud member — has expressed some concern about the standard of service some clients have been receiving from their architect, including lack of budgeting, insufficient documentation, too little communication and poor client relationships.

While I am no longer directly involved in design and construction, to me, cause and solution form an obvious equation: insufficient fees + partial service = a dissatisfied client.

The trend towards competitive fee bidding and the slow erosion of the level of architect/engineer involvement in the construction process has been with us since the mid-1980s.

The move away from building ownership by corporates, plus architects and engineers losing the project leadership role to the new profession of project management, put my profession firmly on the back foot.

And they remain in that uncomfortable position today.

The concerns expressed by the NZIA brings to mind the old saying about peanuts and monkeys. Incidentally, the peanut is not a nut but a legume related to beans and peas — but the saying still contains more than a kernel of truth.

Food for thought

The facade of a restaurant in Auckland's Ponsonby Road displays a large sign reading: "These are the good old days".

This is a reminder to all of us that, right or wrong, good or bad, this is our time, and we need to make the most of it. So let's at least try to get it right.

Profiling tasks can help you make necessary changes

Terry Sage of Trades Coaching New Zealand urges you to keep writing those task lists, as the more statistical data you have, the more answers you can glean from it.

After last month you should now have a well-penned list of all your daily tasks, jobs or duties — whatever you want to call them.

If you haven't got a list then maybe it's a pile of papers with neat writing on that you've accumulated. Ok, stop scratching your head — I will accept the pocket load of scraps.

So what am I hoping you have on these bits of paper? It will include any tasks you have performed, when you did them, how long it took you, did you like doing them, and are they making you a dollar?

For example: invoiced last month's jobs, Wednesday evening, it took four hours, would rather have been at soccer training with mates, and it made \$38,495.

Great, now we have a list that's three pages long, and has the best stats on it — so what? Now we have to make a difference with it.

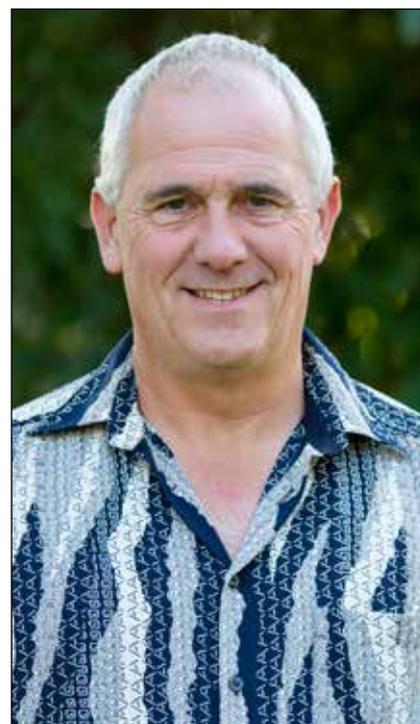
The secret here is that the following tips can make a difference, but not on their own. A tip or advice is only worth the paper it is written — it can only become priceless if you actually use it.

As simple and basic as that sounds, it's the best tip you can get. Look at it this way — how many books have you read on business, how

many seminars with inspirational speakers have told you stuff, how many times has your accountant told you to do something, and has your mate ever said "don't do it that way, try this."

Have you ever managed to do any of it? I don't mean have you had the best intentions or the absolute resolve to want to do it, but have you actually got around to doing it.

I will fill you in with the "why it never makes the cut" scenario — it goes like this nine times out of 10: "That's great advice, I can see how that will make all the difference. On Monday morning that's all I am going to work on."



Monday comes, you are all hyped up, you're sitting at your desk and . . . the phone rings, that annoying text bleep comes out of your phone, you glance at the laptop and there are eight (if you are lucky) emails.

The phone call was from Mrs Bucket complaining that the kitchen cupboards were meant to be avocado not lime. The text was letting you know Arnold's not coming to work today as he has an ingrown toenail.

The first two emails were end of month statements. The next one was a spam advert for pills you don't need — but the fourth was a request for you to price a Russian billionaire's holiday pad for approximately \$15 million.

So what takes priority here? Old Bucket is forgotten, the statements can wait, Arnold — who's Arnold? And now, a new beach bach the size of a small eight-star hotel needs to be priced.

Come on, we are only human. So the changes that will actually mean you will make a profit — and not a life changing loss from the bach — get put aside and life goes on.

So tip number one — if the advice is going to make a world of difference, make sure it becomes priority number one. The small, somewhat insignificant stuff will make you the big money.

What's this got to do with a pile of scrap paper you have been collecting? They are boring, small changes that will take huge amounts of self-control and willpower to make a difference, but that can make a big difference if you can manage them.

So what do you do with these papers? Keep writing them for another month, for two reasons. One is that the more stats we have the better answers we can glean from them. The second is that for the 89% of you that never got around to writing anything, you have a second chance now.

Get your pens out and we'll act on it next time.

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Building Consents Information

For All Authorisations, April 2015

Dwellings	\$739,230,000
Domestic Outbuildings	\$17,335,000
Total Residential	\$756,566,000
Non-residential	\$419,268,000
Total All Buildings	\$1,175,834,000
Non-building Construction	\$22,627,000
Total Authorisations	\$1,198,460,000

Number of new dwellings consented

	Apr 2015	Mar 2015	Apr 2014		Apr 2015	Mar 2015	Apr 2014
Far North District	13	18	13	Horowhenua District	6	4	7
Whangarei District	22	36	11	Kapiti Coast District	26	9	10
Kaipara District	11	14	11	Porirua City	14	13	18
Rodney District	53	76	43	Upper Hutt City	24	25	26
North Shore City	173	223	311	Lower Hutt City	15	99	14
Waitakere City	37	42	37	Wellington City	25	40	69
Auckland City	511	183	135	Masteron District	11	3	2
Manukau City	43	108	75	Carterton District	1	6	5
Papakura District	61	82	56	South Wairarapa District	4	9	5
Franklin District	34	42	40	Tasman District	17	29	15
Thames-Coromandel District	18	25	18	Nelson City	18	15	21
Hauraki District	7	7	3	Marlborough District	14	15	11
Waikato District	49	45	38	Kaikoura District	2	4	1
Matamata-Piako District	2	12	13	Buller District	1	1	6
Hamilton City	85	64	144	Grey District	4	7	7
Waipa District	36	37	34	Westland District	4	4	3
Otorohanga District	2	3	0	Hurunui District	6	15	11
South Waikato District	1	3	0	Waimakariri District	37	69	68
Waikato District	2	7	0	Christchurch City	217	31	356
Taupo District	16	15	10	Selwyn District	124	112	89
Western Bay of Plenty District	18	26	16	Ashburton District	19	17	10
Tauranga City	80	90	65	Timaru District	13	20	15
Rotorua District	7	9	6	Mackenzie District	6	4	4
Whakatane District	15	9	2	Waimate District	1	6	0
Kawerau District	0	0	1	Chatham Islands Territory	0	0	0
Opotiki District	0	1	0	Waikati District	4	8	5
Gisborne District	0	4	6	Central Otago District	13	6	13
Wairoa District	0	1	1	Queenstown-Lakes District	58	46	43
Hastings District	15	19	15	Dunedin City	28	30	26
Napier City	13	7	7	Clutha District	1	4	4
Central Hawke's Bay District	5	7	3	Southland District	7	7	9
New Plymouth District	29	23	39	Gore District	0	1	1
Stratford District	0	4	1	Invercargill City	7	18	9
South Taranaki District	5	3	3	Area Outside TA	0	0	0
Ruapehu District	1	1	0				
Wanganui District	5	5	4	Total	2112	2271	2082
Rangitikei District	0	2	2				
Manawatu District	7	11	11				
Palmerston North City	6	19	24				
Taranaki District	3	1	1				

- Based on 2006 census areas
- Each dwelling unit in a housing project is counted separately
- Figures in these tables may differ from published statistics

Source: Statistics New Zealand

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