



**building today**

NEW ZEALAND

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS FEDERATION

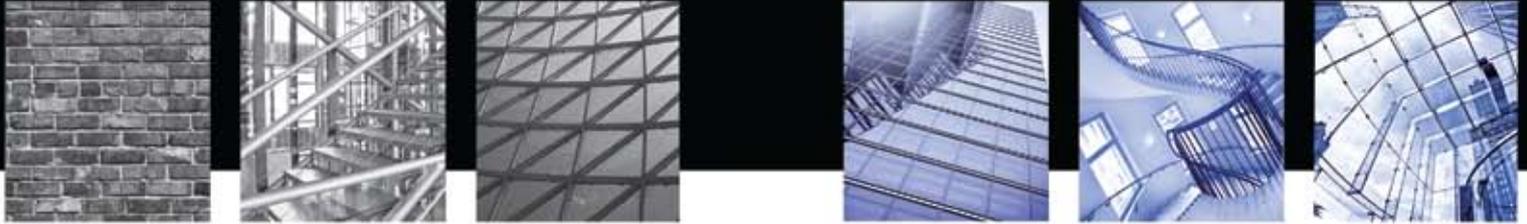
JUNE 2013  
VOL 23 NO 5



# Apprenticeship numbers surge

- Health and Safety top of the agenda
- Coe honoured in Queen's Birthday list
- RMBF Conference — Get in quick!
- BRANZ CEO resigns

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### Features and Presentations

<p>NZ Institute of Architects CPD Day presentations (Member, non-member &amp; student rates apply) on Monday &amp; Tuesday</p>	<p>Educational Sessions from the <i>Registered Master Builders</i> Sunday &amp; Monday</p>
<p>Ree Anderson, <i>Auckland Council Strategy and Research Department</i>, will present 'The journey towards affordable housing: The Auckland experience' on Sunday</p>	<p><i>Certified Builders</i> presents a series of ToolBox Seminars on a range of topical issues including best practice business and technical tips and information for the builder on Sunday</p>
<p>'Made in Germany' Pavillion hosted by the <i>NZ German Business Association</i> will again bring together German Know-How and Kiwi ingenuity!</p>	<p>'What does an affordable house look like and how can you design and build them, while still making a good profit?' Presented by the <i>Green Building Council</i> on Sunday</p>
<p><i>Splash! New Zealand</i> host technical sessions on Monday &amp; Tuesday (early bird rates apply for bookings paid before 14 June)</p>	<p><i>Prefab NZ</i> host sessions on NZ's changing demographic challenges and specific opportunities around retirement and aged care housing on Tuesday afternoon</p>

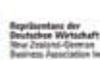
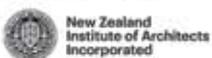
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As outlined in last month's edition of *Building Today*, Health and Safety is at the top of the political agenda. RMBF chief executive Warwick Quinn warns that this country's construction industry can expect the focus to remain on this contentious issue, given its poor record.

We look at the apprentice situation now that the Christchurch rebuild is in full swing — and the predictable shortage now being experienced in some parts of the country.

And we congratulate one of the industry's hardest working individuals — Graham Coe — who has been recognised with a Queen's Birthday Honour for his selfless contribution to the construction sector during the past 50 years or so.

**Andrew Darlington**  
Editor



**cover stories 14, 23**

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# chief's chat

by ceo warwick quinn

## H&S top of the agenda again

**H**ealth and Safety is top of the agenda for the Government at the moment, with the report of the Independent Taskforce on Workplace Health and Safety most likely having a significant effect on the construction sector.

The Taskforce recommends a series of changes and improvements clustered around accountability levers, motivating levers and knowledge levers.

Recommendations include the establishment of a new workplace health and safety agency which the Government has agreed upon. This agency's primary responsibility is workplace harm prevention, including strategy and implementation.

Some of the other recommendations include a new H&S Act based on the Australian Model Law, which extends to include accountability to all those in governance roles, ensures greater effective worker participation, significantly strengthens the regulation of occupational health, introduces measures that reward good H&S performance and increases the cost of poor H&S performance, and has a far greater emphasis to understand the root cause analysis of issues.



We have already seen an increased focus on H&S in our sector with the Working at Heights campaign. We can now expect a lot more. This is understandable given our rather poor record.

The MBIE has recently launched the Canterbury Rebuild Safety Charter that it wants companies and organisations to sign up to. This has 10 key areas and will probably form some of the criteria for ongoing review and inspections.

Those taking part in the programme can expect greater outcomes and benefits, while those outside of it a greater level of scrutiny and oversight.

Other things are going on in the H&S space as well. You may recall comments in articles I have written referring to the Construction Safety Council (CSC).

This council is a coming together of the residential, commercial, civil and specialist trades construction sectors, and it has developed a health and safety competency framework that it will launch shortly.

The framework below illustrates how it will work, and we support its concepts and its simplicity. What this framework does is provide a nationally consistent set of H&S competencies for four tiers in construction.

To date, the CSC has identified the generic hazards and competencies at Tier 1 (entry level) common across all construction sites (residential, civil etc), so that anyone who can demonstrate they possess these can be engaged with confidence that they can keep themselves and other workers safe.

The CSC is looking to develop a standard test (a bit like a driver's licence) that tests the knowledge at Tier 1 and is nationally consistent.

The test could be done on-line, take about 45 minutes and be adaptable to cater for numeracy and literacy barriers. It would be cheap to sit, and be renewed every few years.

The CSC believes if everyone on site had a base level

*Continued page 5*



*The CSC tiered competency framework.*

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027 472 2226

# A welcome to join Registered Master Builders

By RMBF president

David Fabish

**T**he RMBF has recently expanded its membership offering to now welcome individuals such as Licensed Building Practitioners (LBPs), labour-only carpentry contractors, building industry professionals and students.

The Professionals category covers Construction and Project Managers, Quantity Surveyors and Supervisors.

These new membership categories sit alongside our traditional Business and Apprentice membership categories that enjoy the vast array of benefits that come with belonging to the RMBF.

If you work in the building industry, care about your work and are a person of good repute, I welcome you to join the Federation and allow us to assist you in taking a big upward step in your career.

Already there has been an overwhelmingly positive response and uptake of this new opportunity as the RMBF continues onwards with its mission statement to being "a nurturing membership organisation that enhances the reputation of its members, and provides clients with a great building experience".

This goal supports the continuous development of the people and the businesses that operate within our sometimes challenging but rewarding industry.

We are also now able to offer membership access to our newly-developed Small Business Management Course at a very affordable price, which will be of tremendous value to members looking to extend their knowledge in these areas:

- Business Planning

## H&S top of agenda

*From page 4*

of H&S knowledge that was consistent nationwide on all construction sites then that would immediately lift H&S skills.

They do this in Britain now and it works well there — it is easy to administer and is very effective. Australia has a similar concept with the White Card.

We need to get ahead of the game and address H&S matters by developing these sorts of initiatives ourselves so the new government H&S agency isn't forced to do it for us.



- Marketing and Promotion
- Pricing/Finance
- Contracts and Specifications
- Project Planning and Management
- Managing People and Contractors
- Resolving Disputes
- Meeting Regulatory Requirements
- Good Safety Practice
- Record Keeping
- Using IT in the Trade

Specifically customised for the trades, this course can be taken in its entirety or as separate individual modules. I certainly wish this was available when I started out in business, as I believe it is a fast track to learn the management skills that I personally took years to learn.

With increased regulation and compliance requirements within our industry, it's critical that individuals and businesses join an organisation that offers support, education and protection.

It is outstanding to see just how many carpenters and builders have had the confidence in their abilities to apply and qualify as Licensed Building Practitioners.

However, this privilege comes with added accountability and significant risk to both

reputation and bank balance. After spending many years working with the Government in the development of the LBP scheme, we now have to change our focus to one of support and advocacy for LBPs.

There is no doubt that the building industry is becoming more sophisticated and demanding to operate in. Our role is to keep our members informed, knowledgeable and, among other things, offer contracts and guarantees — the ability of which to do this will soon be enshrined in law.

Changes come at a rapid pace, and the RMBF is constantly working with the Government and the wider industry to ensure the best outcomes for participants and the public who engage with our industry.

If you would like to know more about what the Registered Master Builders Federation can offer you, please visit our web site at [www.masterbuilder.org.nz](http://www.masterbuilder.org.nz) or call 0800 762 328.



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AND  
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[WWW.MASTERBUILDER.ORG.NZ](http://WWW.MASTERBUILDER.ORG.NZ)**

## Life after Apprentice of the Year

**F**ormer winners of the Wellington Apprentice of the Year, Matt Sharp of Sharp Builders Ltd and Scott Taylor of Mitchbuild Construction, have now become business owners and Registered Master Builders.

Matt, who took out the 2007 Wellington Apprentice of the Year, says winning the competition was a key factor in the success of his business.

"Certainly, when I won the competition, the biggest benefit was industry kudos. There were a few great prizes too and, above all else, it was just a fantastic experience. But years on, I still get recognition for winning the Apprentice of the Year. I mention the title on all my quotes and people always comment on it — that and being a Registered Master Builder gives clients a lot of confidence in me and my business."

Matt says his apprenticeship gave him the technical building background he needed to succeed.

"From a trade point of view, I think it definitely helped me understand what I needed to know to be a profitable residential builder.

"I encourage anyone thinking about entering to just

give it a go. It has been a great base for my career."

Scott, who won the title in 2009, started his own business when he began his apprenticeship, and has worked on many large scale projects since taking out the award.

"I did my apprenticeship while I was working for myself — which is a bit abnormal — but it worked! I worked as a labourer for four years while I completed a full-time marketing and management degree, and then I started up on my own. I was 21, and I had my own business," he says.

Scott believes the competition gave him the opportunity to measure himself against others in the industry, and helped him meet other builders who were pivotal to getting his business off the ground.

"When I entered the Apprentice of the Year I had a team of four builders working for me — I didn't have much to compare myself to. The competition definitely gave me confidence that I was on par with my peers."

Scott says his apprenticeship provides assurance to clients that he is qualified and is good at what he does.

"More people should invest in apprenticeships. My apprenticeship gave me the skills I needed for a

successful building career, but I think it's more than just the apprenticeship — it's who you work with and how much they are willing to teach you.

"Employers should really devote time and energy to their apprentices — it makes such a difference."

Both Matt and Scott have a busy year ahead, and look forward to seeing the next round of successful apprentices in this year's competition.

Entries for the Apprentice of the Year competition are now open and will close on June 13. For further information, or to enter the competition, go to [www.apprenticeoftheyear.co.nz](http://www.apprenticeoftheyear.co.nz).

Apprentices, employers and those young people aspiring to be a part of the construction industry are also encouraged to join the Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/apprenticeoftheyear](http://www.facebook.com/apprenticeoftheyear).

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

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# Construction sector celebrates Queen's Birthday honour

New Zealand's construction industry is celebrating the appointment of industry stalwart Graham Coe as an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit, announced recently in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

Registered Master Builders Federation chief executive Warwick Quinn says Mr Coe is the industry's single most worthy recipient of the honour after an illustrious half century career in the construction sector.

"Graham's life's work has contributed significantly to New Zealand as a nation, through his dedication to the betterment of the industry. His leadership within Master Builders and BRANZ has led to a sector-wide improvement in the standards required and quality delivered by builders to New Zealanders."

Mr Coe, a life member of the Registered Master Builders Federation as well as Auckland Master Builders Association, spent 36 years running his own construction companies — including Franklin-based Coe and Lewer Builders — building hundreds of new dwellings and alterations, schools, churches, factories and the Waiuku Civic Centre.



*Graham Coe, who has been appointed as an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit.*

Mr Coe first joined the Auckland Master Builders Association in 1972, and held various management and board positions — including branch president, board member, junior vice-president, president and immediate past president — before he was made a life member in 2002.

He joined the New Zealand Master Builders Federation

marketing committee in 1990, and in 1993 was made its president. A series of senior positions within the organisation — Master Build Services board member, NZ Federation Council and then the Board — followed, before he was made president of the Registered Master Builders Federation in 2001. In 2004 he was made a life member.

Mr Coe was also instrumental in developing the House of the Year programme — he was chairman of the national judging panel between 2001 and 2010 — which has been credited with lifting the standards of residential building in this country.

He has also played a pivotal role in the success of the Building and Research Association New Zealand (BRANZ), as chairman of both BRANZ Group and Branz Ltd from 2007 and 2008 respectively until this year.

Mr Quinn says Mr Coe has contributed selflessly to the sector, with much of the work done in his own time and out of his own pocket.

"The sector has collectively asked — how can we adequately acknowledge what Graham has done for our industry? A royal honour, we believe, is appropriate recognition."

## RMBF says building stats better but . . .

The latest building consent figures indicate the highest number of new homes and apartments consents in five years.

Statistics New Zealand figures show 1755 new homes and apartment consents were issued for April 2013, a 43% increase on April 2012.

The trend for the number of new houses and apartments has increased for 25 consecutive months from March 2011 when an historic low was reached, with the level now 61% higher.

RMBF chief executive Warwick Quinn says the overall result is certainly a positive one, "but we need to look below the national statistics to really understand what is going on".

Mr Quinn says the growth is being driven by Canterbury and Auckland, and when one takes out 185 apartments in Otago and Wellington in April, the Canterbury and Auckland share of overall activity

continues to grow (now more than 50%) while the rest of the country is quite flat.

"While we like to see the consent figures rise, we have to be careful not to get carried away with the increase without appreciating the vagaries within it," Mr Quinn says.

"We have been predicting for a couple of years now 'the tale of two cities', with Auckland and Canterbury dominating the new home construction market activity while wider New Zealand struggles."

Mr Quinn agrees that the regions are certainly better than they have been, but it is still very tough there and work is hard to come by. He believes if activity doesn't pick up then migration for tradespeople to Canterbury and Auckland is likely.

He says the housing pressures in Auckland and Canterbury have been driving up property values for a while now. These are the only regions in New Zealand that have continuous rising prices — which generates

greater levels of building activity to meet a shortfall in supply.

The rest of New Zealand has some property price increases, but the levels are similar to what they were in 2008.

Mr Quinn says while the increased level of work is welcomed, overall building activity is still quite low and coming off record low levels.

"New Zealand should be building in the order of 20,000 to 25,000 new homes per annum to maintain its housing stock and population growth, and we have been well below those levels for the past five years," he says.

"While we will see more new residential consents issued again in 2013, it is not on the back of a strong economy but in response to housing problems in our two biggest cities.

"There is some spare capacity, but as the growth is not consistent, a redistribution of that capacity will be needed to address this trend," he says.

# Winning home 'small in proportion, but big in personality'

Clive Barrington of Clive Barrington Construction was rapt when his "unusual" Christchurch home was announced the winner of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment New Homes under \$250,000 award at the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers 2012 House of the Year.

Constructed completely offsite, Mr Barrington says the home was designed to stand the test of time.

"After the Christchurch earthquake, our clients wanted a home which could be easily re-levelled, or even picked up and relocated in the event of another quake," Mr Barrington says.

"So we designed the home at only 98 square metres, which meant we were able to transport it in one shift.

"We just jacked up the house and put it on the back of a truck in one day, without having to split the house in half. Not your typical build, but a great project to be involved in," he says.

Mr Barrington says the home was a challenging build, but that made the win even more rewarding.

"We had to build quickly and on a very limited budget because the client had nowhere to live until the build was complete. With this in mind, we managed to build it in four months while maintaining top quality," he says.

The judges hailed the Merivale home as small in proportion, but big in personality.

"Outstanding workmanship and exceptional design have created a home that is sympathetic to its surroundings and could well find its place in the housing solutions for Christchurch," they said.

Mr Barrington says the House of the Year competition is definitely worth entering, if you think your workmanship is up to it.



Clive Barrington Construction's "unusual" Christchurch home was announced the winner of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment New Homes under \$250,000 award at the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers 2012 House of the Year.

"The competition is a great way for builders to see if they can cut it with the people who are winning, particularly those who haven't entered before. It's really the only way you can judge your work against your peers.

"We see a lot of value in this competition. We've actually been entering since the House of the Year first started. It gives people confidence that we can do a good job, and allows our existing clients to see we work to a high standard.

"Winning this competition is all about public awareness — people realise that we are great at what we do."

The Awards are made possible through the support of PlaceMakers, James Hardie, GIB, Nulook, MBIE, Future-Proof Building, Carters, ITM, Plumbing World, Resene and Westpac.

For more information about the competition, visit the Registered Master Builders web site at [www.masterbuilder.org.nz](http://www.masterbuilder.org.nz).



Clive Barrington with his award.

## Rural home reaps rewards

**P**aul Jones of Paul Jones Construction believes his ability to cater to his client's rural lifestyle ultimately won him the New Homes \$450,000 - \$600,000 award in the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers 2012 House of the Year competition.

After winning a number of Gold Reserve Awards and making it to the national finals in the past, Mr Jones says for his Eltham home to be named the best in New Zealand was "incredible".

"We're very proud of this build — it's a beautiful home but also very functional," Mr Jones says.

"I think this home stood out because it really catered to the lifestyle of the owner. We put a lot of thought into how we could accommodate the fact that the owner's site was on a farm."

Mr Jones says the biggest challenge of the build was the preparation.

"The site was actually cut into a hill and levelled out, so we ended up doing all the site prep a year prior," he says.

"We built up the foundations by about two metres, had it engineered and certified, and then had to let it settle for a year before we actually built on it. To say the least, a lot of prep went into getting this home right!"

The judges called the home a "fantastically-built working farmhouse" in a magnificent hill setting.

"This incredibly considered design accommodates practical elements, such as a large porch veranda and wet areas conducive to rural living, allowing this beautifully crafted home to remain pristine and enjoyed by its owners," they said.

"This is a home to be proud of, and was the deserving winner of the category."

Mr Jones says he continues to enter House of the Year because it's the best marketing opportunity a New Zealand builder will find.

"If you're thinking about entering the competition, definitely go for it. You'll learn a lot and get an appreciation for some of the builds happening around the country," he says.

"I was blown away by some of the houses in the competition. You tend to be a little bit isolated in your own patch, so the competition provided a great chance to see top builds from around the country."

The Awards are made possible through the support of



Paul Jones Construction's entry won the New Homes \$450,000 - \$600,000 award in the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers 2012 House of the Year competition.



Paul Jones and his wife Margie with their award.

PlaceMakers, James Hardie, GIB, Nulook, MBIE, Future-Proof Building, Carters, ITM, Plumbing World, Resene and Westpac.

For more information about the competition, visit the Registered Master Builders web site at [www.masterbuilder.org.nz](http://www.masterbuilder.org.nz).

# RMBF Conference 2013 set

The RMBF annual conference for 2013 is titled Keep Calm and Carry On — a reference to ensuring that while activity may start to increase, it's important that the industry continues

to operate under strong and disciplined business practices to guide it through what is traditionally known as a "boom cycle".

RMBF president David Fabish says

the conference programme has shaped up very well, and that he is very much looking forward to the Federation's 113th annual conference at the Forsyth Barr Stadium in

Registered Master Builders Federation  
Conference 2013

## Registration

To register go to: [www.masterbuilder.org.nz](http://www.masterbuilder.org.nz) and click on the Conference 2013 link on the home page.

All delegates need to register individually.

Confirmation will be emailed to you on receipt of your registration.

Registered Master Builders Federation will forward you a tax invoice for payment.

### Final Registration Date

Final Registration date is Friday 14 June 2013.

### Late Registration Fee

Registrations received after 14 June 2013 may incur a \$50 per person additional charge.

### Delegate Package

Full registration includes:

- Attendance to all conference Business Sessions and Workshops
- Evening functions
- Access to the trade exhibition area
- All morning teas and lunches as per programme
- Transport throughout conference

**Cost : \$650.00 + GST**

### Partner Tour Package

Partners registration includes:

- Partners Tour on Friday 12 July
- Evening functions
- Attendance to Guest Speakers on Friday and Saturday morning
- Access to the trade exhibition area

**Cost : \$430.00 + GST**

### Individual Registration Options

If you cannot make the entire conference, you may wish to attend part of it. The registration form allows you to choose these options:

Partners Tour	\$70.00 + GST
Welcome Function	\$170.00 + GST
Gala Dinner	\$150.00 + GST
Day Rate Thursday 11 July	\$165.00 + GST
Day Rate Friday 12 July	\$165.00 + GST
Kids Club	FOC

### Sponsor Package

All inclusions and costs as per the benefit schedule appended to the sponsorship contract. **All sponsor representatives must register individually on-line.**

## Conference Programme

### Thursday 11 July

7.00am

Registration Desk opens at Forsyth Barr Stadium

8.50am

Coach Transfers to Stadium

9.30am - 10.00am

Welcome Conference Address by RMBF President, David Fabish

10.00am - 10.30am

Address from Hon Maurice Williamson

**10.30am - 11.00am**

**Morning Tea**

11.00am - 12.00pm

**Carters Workshop**

12.00pm - 1.00pm

**Building Your Business (tbc)**

**Carters Workshop**

**The Building Act - The Changes**

**1.00pm - 2.00pm**

**Lunch**

2.00pm - 2.45pm

**BCITO Business Session**

2.45pm - 3.45pm

**Murray Thom**

**Mitre 10 Business Session**

3.45pm

**Sir Ray Avery**

Transport from Stadium and

accommodation to Train Station

**4.30pm - 11.45pm**

**ITM Welcome Function**

**Train Excursion and**

**Waikouaiti Hall**

### Friday 12 July

9.00am

Coaches transfers to Stadium

9.15am - 9.40am

**Telecom** - Forsyth Barr Stadium

**9.40am - 10.30**

**Andrew Holmes, Hawkins Construction**

**10.30am**

**Stadium Tours**

**Coaches depart Stadium to accommodation for Partners Tour and Kids Club**

**10.30am - 11.00am**

**Morning Tea**

11.00am - 12.00pm

**Carters Workshop**

12.00pm - 1.00pm

**Health and Safety**

**Carters Workshop**

**1.00pm - 1.45pm**

**Lean Building - Scott Sedam**

1.45pm - 2.45pm

**Lunch**

**NALCO Guest Speaker**

2.45pm

**Kevin Biggar**

6.30pm

Transport to accommodation - free time

Transport from accommodation to

**7.00pm - midnight**

**Gala Dinner**

**PlaceMakers Gala Dinner**

**Larnach Castle**

### Saturday 13 July

8.30am

Coaches depart accommodation to

9.00am - 10.00am

Forsyth Barr Stadium

**BRANZ Guest Speaker**

**10.00am - 10.30am**

**Sir Graham Henry**

10.30 - onwards

**Morning Tea**

**RMBF AGM**

Conference ends

Transport to accommodation/airport

**Note: all lunches, morning and afternoon teas are held in the trade exhibition area**

# to be a stormer!

Dunedin.

He says there are some fantastic social events lined up, including the Taieri Gorge Railway — “a first for many delegates I suspect”.

“Industry talk indicates a pick-up in activity in 2013, and I hope to be able to share more positive stories with you all about how your year is going by the time we meet down south in

July,” Mr Fabish says.

*Building Today* takes a close look with this preview of the conference, including details of business and social events.

Registered Master Builders Federation  
Conference 2013

## Functions and Activities

### ITM Welcome Function

Thursday 11 July

#### Train Excursion and Waikouaiti Hall



Departing from the historic Dunedin Railway Station, we'll take the Seaside train up the Pacific Coast in what was once considered the highlight of a now bygone Christchurch to Invercargill train journey. Alighting in Waikouaiti for a fantastic Southern shin-dig at their famous Hall.

Dress: Smart Casual or 'Kiwiana'

### PlaceMakers Gala Dinner

Friday 12 July

#### Larnach Castle



With its exciting, sometimes scandalous and tragic history, magnificent carved ceilings, New Zealand antiques and breathtaking views, Larnach Castle offers you a vision of the past and present.

We will be welcomed by a lone piper on the turret and taken through for a fantastic evening in the Grand Ballroom.

Dress: To theme - **Scottish Braveheart** - or Semi-formal (Men: dark suits, tie optional. Women: short or less formal long dresses)

### GIB Partners Tour

Friday 12 July, Departs accommodation 10.30am

#### Olveston House and Careys Bay Historical Hotel

Morning Tea and a guided tour of the historic Olveston House. Designed for Dunedin Businessman and Philanthropist Mr David Theomin by English architect, Sir Ernest George, Olveston was built between 1904 and 1906. Jacobean in style, the grace and grandeur of Olveston is distinguished by a wealth of decorative detail, while maintaining the intimacy of a private family home.

From here we travel to lunch at Careys Bay Historical Hotel. Built in 1874 the Carey's Bay historic fully licensed hotel and Seafood Restaurant has built a reputation for fine food and dining.

Lunch is followed by some free time to explore Port Chalmers before returning to the conference accommodation.



### Kids Club

Friday 12 July, 10.00am – 3.00pm

We start our adventure with a visit to the award-winning Otago Museum, where we spend time in Discovery World, we switch on to science in a fully interactive space. From here it's on to the Museum's Tropical Forest, which brings you face to face with hundreds of beautiful, live exotic butterflies, as well as other hot-weather-happy inhabitants including fish, birds, turtles and geckos.

An early lunch at the Museum Café, then we go to every kids favourite – Cadbury World. After a short tour it's goodie bags and tasty snacks for everyone.

To finish the day, it's off to the fantastic Moana Pool, for a dip in Southern New Zealand's largest swimming pool complex.

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## news

# First quarter sees record number of new building apprenticeships

The Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) has seen a massive 22% increase in new building apprenticeships as a result of New Zealand's rebounding building industry.

There have been 1520 sign-ups in the first quarter of 2013 compared to 1250 in the same quarter in 2012, which BCITO chief executive Ruma Karaitiana attributes to the demand for apprentices and the success of the Government's Reboot grant initiative.



BCITO chief executive Ruma Karaitiana.

"The building and construction industry is flourishing at the moment, and there is a real need for apprentices. In some areas, demand for apprentices is outstripping supply," Mr Karaitiana says.

"Building consents for new houses hit a five-year high last month, with 1755 new houses consented in April 2013. Career seekers are recognising the potential of this industry and the exciting projects that lie ahead in the wake of the Christchurch rebuild, and in other parts of the country."

Earlier this year the Government announced it would invest up to \$40 million in incentives for trade apprentices and their employers, which has encouraged more apprentices to sign up, Mr Karaitiana says.

"Eligible new apprentices signing up with the BCITO after April 1, 2013, can receive \$2000 towards tools and training costs, and their employers will receive the same amount.

"Our initial estimates show that more than 90% of BCITO apprentices who have signed up since March 6, 2013, are eligible for the Government's Reboot grant."

Auckland has seen a massive 42% increase in apprenticeship sign-ups, closely followed by a 38% increase in Christchurch. This reinforces that Auckland is going to contribute to the coming boom just as much as Christchurch, Mr Karaitiana says.

"Demand for apprentices is so high that the BCITO is launching a recruitment campaign to get more people into the industry.

"We've launched our 'Get Real' recruitment campaign because the industry is booming and we need more talent. With Canterbury and Auckland driving a \$46 billion building boom over the next five years, there's going to be guaranteed work in the building and construction industry for a long time.

"We encourage people considering their career options to visit [GETREAL.co.nz](http://GETREAL.co.nz) to learn more about how being an apprentice gives you a real lifestyle, real training and a real career."

• New apprentices still hard to find, page 23.

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## The designer says



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## The builder says



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# buildnz reflects vibrant building and design sector

**E**vidence is strong that New Zealand's building and design sectors are generally doing well, with interest in their premier event delighting industry association and event organisers.

buildnz designex is set to be one of the best yet, showing that the industry is strong and there is confidence in the future.

Endorsed by the Registered Master Builders Federation, Certified Builders Association, BRANZ, the NZ Institute of Architects, Designers Institute, Furniture Association and Lifemark, the event benefits everyone from suppliers through to contractors to home and building owners.

Rob Lavender, from buildnz designex organiser XPO Exhibitions, says suppliers have flocked to the event to such a degree that available floor space is extremely

limited.

"Obviously there is a lot of confidence that the years ahead will be good for those involved with, or connected to, building and design," Mr Lavender says.

"The level of interest from offshore is also high, and that also bodes well."

## Learning opportunities

buildnz designex is the country's biggest industry trade show and a learning opportunity, with onsite seminars to help those attending stay right up to date, including many that contribute to professional development requirements/points for some professions and trades.

"This is a trade-only event and is a must-attend on the

calendar of everyone serious about their business. It's also the only place in New Zealand where those in the industry can see the very latest technology and developments over just a few days."

There'll be plenty of fun and valuable networking time too, and one lucky attendee will win a brand-new Ford Mondeo Titanium EcoBoost worth \$52,990.

"More than 5000 trade visitors know the value of attending, and everyone serious about success should join them," Mr Lavender says.

buildnz designex 2013 will be held on Sunday, June 23 to Tuesday, June 25 at Auckland's ASB Showgrounds in Greenlane.

The event is expected to attract more than 5000 trade visitors. For more information and to register, go to [www.buildnz.com](http://www.buildnz.com).

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## news

## Pods provide answer to rental crisis

**A** Christchurch construction company has launched its own solution to the worker accommodation shortage in the city.

The Pods, designed by Edifice, are 20ft shipping containers converted into compact, stylish, comfortable and affordable worker accommodation.

Edifice managing director Rob Strickland says he decided to establish The Pods after he struggled to find rental accommodation for his own construction workers arriving in Christchurch to help meet rebuild demands.

"The rebuild is starting to move at pace. Thousands of workers are now in need of long- and short-term accommodation. We saw a gap in the market and an opportunity to house workers arriving in Christchurch and, hopefully, relieve some of the pressure off the residential rental market," Mr Strickland says.

"With motels costing more than \$100 a night, and many with no vacancies, workers and their employers are looking for an alternative solution. At approximately \$250 per week per unit, we believe The Pods are a quality, practical and affordable answer to the rental crisis."

Edifice offers two investment opportunities. The first is to custom design and build The Pods for private investors who have suitable unused land available. The investors would then manage and rent The Pods privately.

The second option is to invest in The Pod Accommodation Project — a worker accommodation development owned and operated by Edifice. The Pod Accommodation Project will feature a large communal kitchen and central indoor and outdoor living spaces, and will have on-site management and security.

Each unit will be fully-furnished with a one bedroom ensuite and kitchenette. Each pod will also have all creature comforts, including Wi-Fi, Sky Television, a blu-ray player with movie library, a flat screen LCD TV and a sound system.

Minimum investment in The Pod Accommodation Project is \$45,000 for one unit.

The Pods have been architecturally designed by Auckland architecture firm Moai. Each unit will be built in New Zealand although materials, including the shipping container, are made in China.

Edifice is currently in the process of confirming a location for The Pod Accommodation Project. Plans are for the build to be complete by October 2013.



Edifice managing director Rob Strickland with The Pod prototype.



How many construction workers can you fit in a pod? 47 apparently!



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# PlaceMakers Hornby opens its doors

Christchurch builders, who have been counting down the days for the opening of PlaceMakers' new, purpose-designed and built Hornby store, don't have to wait any longer, with the store opening its doors on June 5.

All eyes have been on the Glassworks Industry Park in Hornby since it was announced last August that PlaceMakers was to open a new 2745 sq m store.

PlaceMakers chief executive John Beveridge says the Hornby store opening marks an exciting time of growth for PlaceMakers as the Christchurch rebuild gets off the ground.

"The new store is an extension of PlaceMakers' existing Christchurch network, and means we can offer customers an increased range of quality materials and products at four convenient locations across the city.

"The opening of our Hornby store will also create employment opportunities for Cantabrians. We've been overwhelmed with the interest we've received,



PlaceMakers chief executive John Beveridge.

particularly for yard sales and administration positions."

Mr Beveridge says PlaceMakers fully supports the Christchurch rebuild, and wants to see it executed in a timely fashion.

"We've been here for over 25 years and we're here for the long haul. We are part of the fabric of Canterbury, and our commitment is to be at the heart of the rebuild.

"That commitment has driven our decision to expand and ensure we have stores where our clients — those who are rebuilding Christchurch — need us to be."

PlaceMakers Hornby, which features an extensive trade store, drive-through warehouse and timber yard, will work alongside existing PlaceMakers Christchurch stores in Antigua Street, Cranford Street and Riccarton.

"We've got the city covered. We can supply quality product and materials to builders when and where they need it," Mr Beveridge says.

PlaceMakers Antigua Street branch operator Steve Brown will operate both the Antigua Street and Hornby stores.

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# The Bendometer is back!

The Cement and Concrete Association of New Zealand (CCANZ) and the Pacific Steel Group have reissued the Bendometer to assist best practice in the bending of steel reinforcing.

The bending of reinforcement requires the attention of those in the construction industry as practices can be enhanced if the design, construction, precasting and transportation sectors understand the issues and work towards a common goal of best practice.

During use, the appropriate Bendometer disc should be selected by matching the width of one of the notches to the diameter of the bar to be checked.

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The inside diameter of each bend in the bar should be equal to, or greater than, the diameter of the selected disc. Any bend with an inside diameter less than the diameter of the selected disc, does not comply with New Zealand Standards.

Endorsed by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), the Bendometer is intended for use on main bars only, not for stirrups and ties.

The Bendometer is available free of charge by contacting CCANZ on 04 499 8820, or by emailing [admin@ccanz.org.nz](mailto:admin@ccanz.org.nz).



The Bendometer is a simple tool to assist with the appropriate bending of reinforcing steel.



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# BRANZ announces chief executive resignation

**B**RANZ has regrettably announced the resignation of its chief executive, Pieter Burghout, Group chairman Chris Preston said recently.

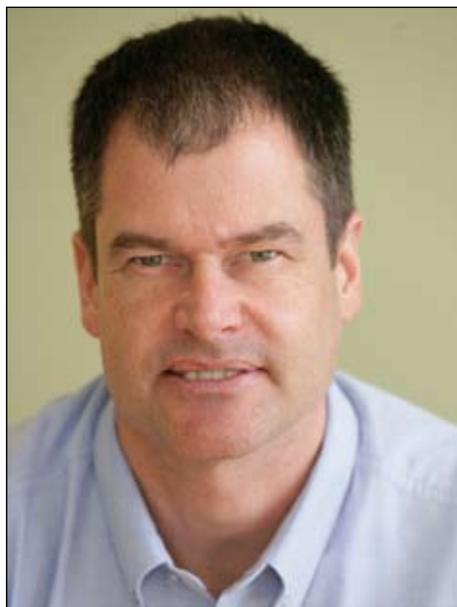
Mr Burghout's resignation will be effective from June 30, 2013.

Mr Preston says Mr Burghout has made a significant contribution to the ongoing development of BRANZ during his five-year tenure as chief executive.

## BRANZ profile lifted

He has overseen key projects such as a major redevelopment of the BRANZ headquarters at Judgeford, north of Wellington, and the implementation of an industry research strategy.

He had also lifted the profile of BRANZ's work significantly through industry and government



Departing BRANZ chief executive Pieter Burghout.

channels, Mr Preston says.

"Pieter took on the role of BRANZ CEO at a pivotal point in our history. He has been instrumental in helping build the organisation to its current position as New Zealand's premier building and construction research business, and he is leaving the organisation in great heart."

Mr Preston says the BRANZ Board will begin recruitment of a new chief executive immediately.

Until a new candidate is confirmed for the role, the BRANZ Board has appointed Mr Preston as interim chief executive.

Mr Preston's tenure as Group chairman was to cease in August, so he will now leave the chairman's position earlier, also at the end of June.

Mr Burghout is leaving BRANZ to take up the role of Fletcher Building's Canterbury operations general manager.

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# New apprentices hard to find!\*

**O**ver the past few years, the number of apprentices in the New Zealand construction industry has decreased to nearly half of what it was in the boom years.

In 2012 the number hit rock bottom, falling well below 5000 apprentices. It's great that things are finally turning around, but the BCITO is finding some employers are now struggling to find an apprentice to fit their requirements.

The recovery is certainly leading the way in Auckland and Christchurch, which is where most new apprentices are signing up. This isn't to say that things aren't happening in other areas too — it's just not quite at the same level. And the industry can look forward to a recovery across the country over the next few years.

The number of people going into new apprenticeships is certainly an indicator for better times. The BCITO is particularly excited about this as the volume of new apprenticeships in 2013 has surpassed anything experienced over the past few years.

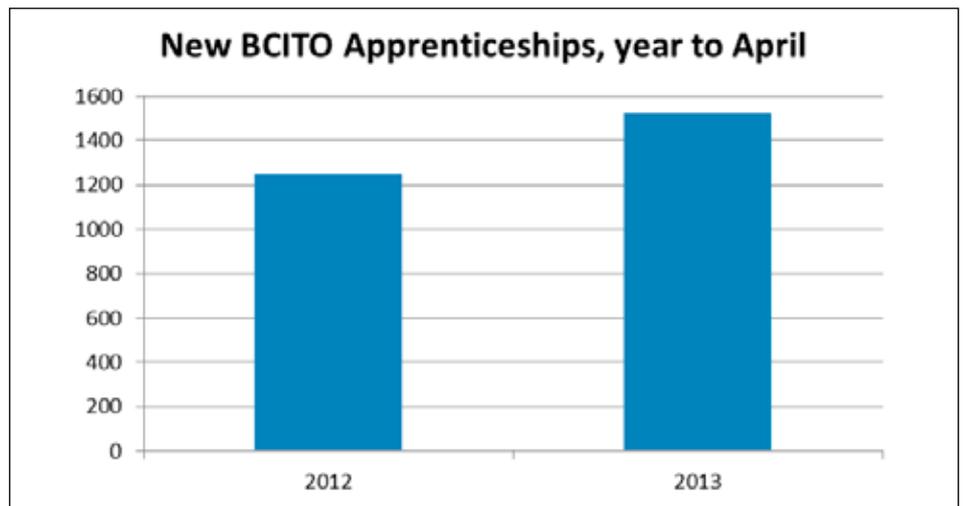
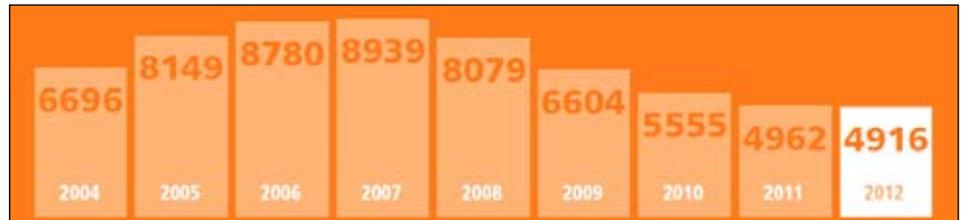
So this is not a seasonal blip in the data — things are seriously happening out there. In the year to April, there has been a 22% increase in new BCITO apprenticeships compared to last year.

Usually at this time of year things start winding down into winter. In 2013, this drop has been relatively minor, and the BCITO is still taking calls from plenty of employers who need more and more apprentices to cope with upcoming demand.

It seems that not even winter will slow this recovery.

In 2011 the BCITO introduced a new "job-matching" service to help find new apprentices for BCITO employers. Since late 2012 the organisation has been

Annual BCITO apprentice numbers:



flat out taking calls from employers looking for new apprentices — another encouraging sign.

However, it seems the laws of supply and demand are starting to swing, and apprentices are becoming increasingly hard to find.

Many employers contacting the organisation are disappointed to hear that anyone with building experience is already employed in the industry. This means most are now taking on younger people who are "green", with little or no experience.

Finding suitable apprentices with the right attitude is, therefore, really important, and even these people are now in short supply in Auckland and Christchurch.

Those contacting the BCITO looking for an apprentice can expect to wait at least a week — and sometimes longer — before anyone suitable is found.

The BCITO is also actively promoting its trades-to-career seekers so that it has a pool of people with a great attitude to get into training.

If you are an employer and need a new apprentice, contact the BCITO on 0800 422 486. Suitable apprentices are being found for employers within a week or two, although there are no guarantees.

\* In certain areas!

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# Quake damage control with high seismic performance

By Roy Kane

After the Canterbury earthquakes of 2010 and 2011, to undertake the design of a three-storey medical centre for construction in the CBD of Christchurch required considerable background research, an extensive review of the relevant engineering literature and a great deal of in-depth analysis.

There would be 5000 sq m of specialised facilities, including four operating theatres, patient bedrooms and urology, radiology, orthopaedics and women's health clinics, not forgetting some 650 sq m of plant deck on the roof and a further plant room at ground level.

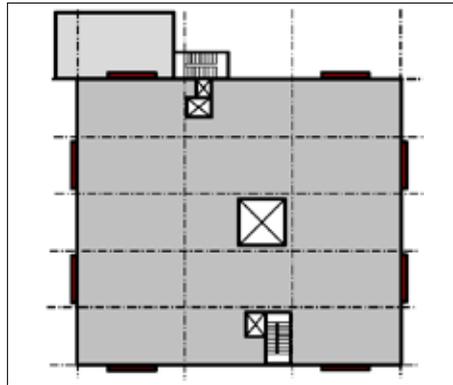
The client, Nobby Holdings Ltd, awarded the design to Alan Reay Consultants Ltd, Doug Latham taking the role of design engineer.

"Because of the type of occupancy, this building was considered an importance Level 4 structure, which is the emergency facilities standard — ie, it is designed to resist an earthquake 1.8 times stronger than a standard building can resist," Mr Latham says.

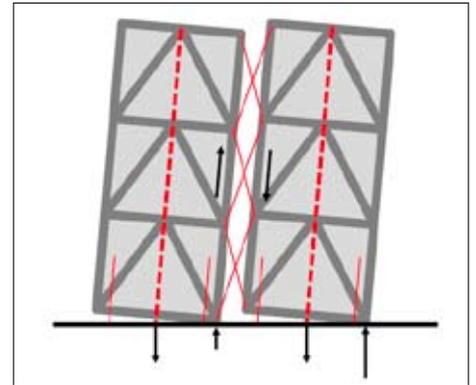
In a paper presented at the Steel Innovations Conference held in Christchurch in February 2013, Mr Latham explained that to meet the design and performance requirements, the Kilmore Street Medical & Specialist Centre would utilise a post-tensioned steel rocking and dissipating system, representing the first application of steel PRESSS technology in New Zealand. (PRESSS stands for Precast, or in this case Prefabricated, Structural Seismic Systems, originally developed and tested in the United States.)

"The lateral load-resisting system consists of coupled, steel-braced frames (or steel "walls"), vertically post-tensioned by un-bonded high strength steel bars. The frames are able to rock during a significant seismic event, with the post-tensioning providing a restoring force that re-centres (pulls the building back straight).

"The structure implements an 'Advanced-Flag Shape' (AFS) system, where displacement-proportional and velocity-proportional energy

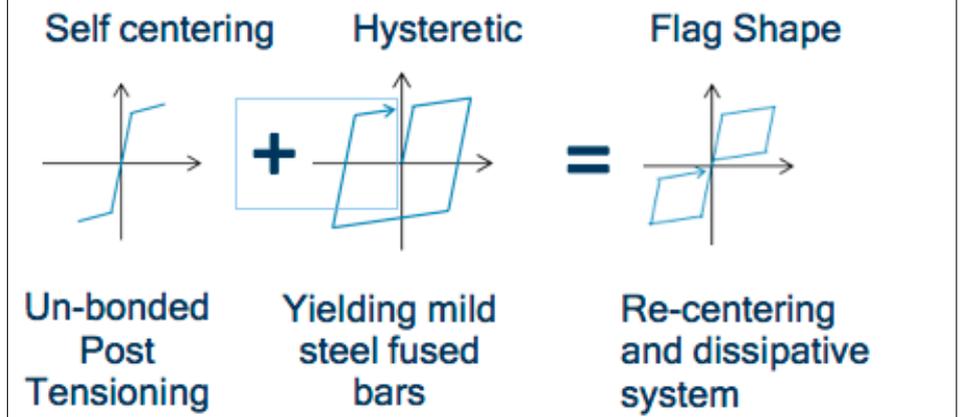


Floor plan showing the position of the eight seismic frames, two on each wall.



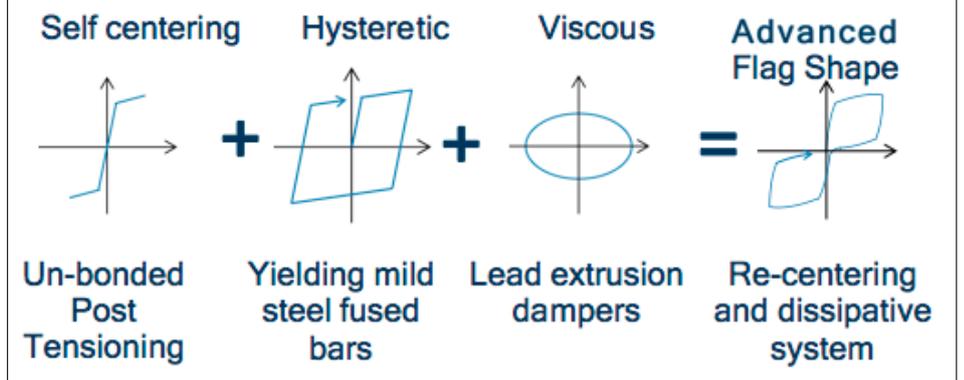
Schematic showing the rocking action of coupled seismic frames.

## The Initial "Hybrid" System



Showing the initial hybrid system.

## A "Second Generation" Hybrid System



Showing the Advanced Hybrid system with the addition of lead extrusion dampers.

dissipation mechanisms are combined in parallel to the re-centering contribution from the un-bonded post-tensioned bars.

"In this particular case, the two types of damping are provided by replaceable axially-yielding mild steel fuse-bars and High Force-to-Volume lead extrusion devices.

"The AFS system was developed and tested at the University of Canterbury under the direction of Associate Professor Stefano Pampanin. It is implemented here for the first time in real practice," Mr Latham says.

The building floor plate is approximately 45m x 40m and consists of a predominantly steel structure. The suspended floors are comprised of steel-concrete composite slabs (ComFlor 60) with eight sets of coupled steel post-tensioned braced frames located around the perimeter to provide the lateral load resistance.

The building is clad with curtain-wall glazing, and the braced frames sit in a frosted glass enclosure so that they are incorporated as a feature of the architecture.

"The seismic resisting system consists of pairs



Architect's render of the Kilmore Street Medical & Specialist Centre. Image: Wilson & Hill, Christchurch

of Concentrically Braced Frames (CBFs) coupled together. Each CBF is a single fabricated element, and is vertically post-tensioned to the foundation with two 75mm high strength Macalloy bars.

"The frames sit in a base 'shoe' which acts as a shear key under horizontal loading, and allows the frames to rock. The dampers, which dissipate the earthquake's energy, are located at the base of the frames at the rocking interface and between the frames to provide coupling.

"One of the characteristics of rocking systems is that as the frames (or walls) rock, it causes the far edge of the frame to lift. If the floor is rigidly tied to the frames, the floor will also lift up, potentially damaging the floor and causing discomfort for the occupants.

"A feature of this design includes special detailing at the connection between the floor diaphragms and the seismic frames to isolate

*Continued page 26*

# Resilience.

## Structural steel is the proven technical, commercial and design solution.

From page 25

the floor from the vertical movements experienced by the frames as they rock, while still being able to transfer the horizontal earthquake loads," Mr Latham says.

Even before the main contract was tendered, John Jones Steel Ltd was nominated as the steel subcontractor to assist with the design and buildability of the project, with its new technology. This ensured the ultimate success of the structural frame build and a seamless transition into the main contract with Fletcher Construction.

However, Christchurch's rising demand for steel made it necessary to bring D&H Steel into the picture in a joint effort that combined the resources of the two fabricators, John Jones Steel having feet on the ground and D&H Steel boosting capacity.

John Jones Steel managing director Frank van Schaijik says their co-operation with D&H Steel on the project proved that New Zealand steel constructors can achieve capacity and performance with none of the risks that outsourcing to a foreign supplier often involves.

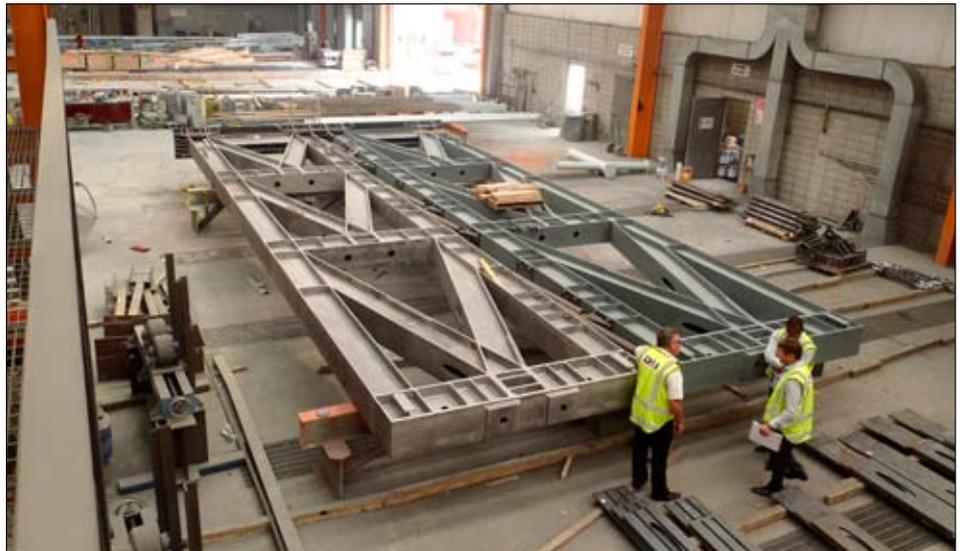
D&H general manager Wayne Carson agrees. "It's a best of both worlds approach to ensure our industry can supply the market without the need to source from offshore," he says.

"It's all about local responsiveness, horsepower to meet tight project deadlines and providing quality in a market that is demanding new levels of QA and accountability."

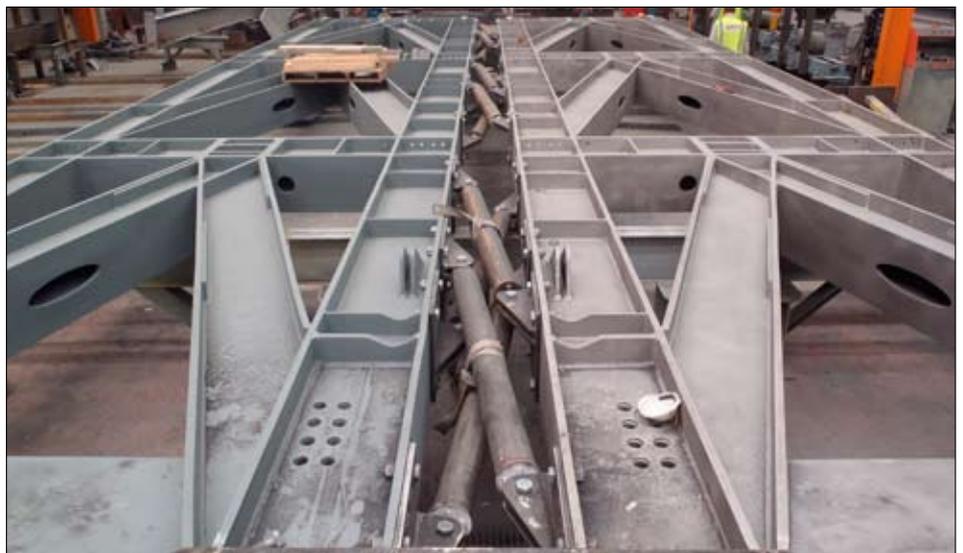
In the D&H Steel workshop, where some of the more intensive fabrication and welding was done, advanced QA procedures provided the engineer with certainty as to both material and workmanship. The project requirements included:

- Full material traceability, with each and every element identified by individual mill certificates and heat numbers to demonstrate compliance to standards
- Detailed Factory Production Control System to track and record material details of each and every element
- 100% welder traceability, including full weld-mapping and a comprehensive Welding Quality Management System
- Extensive inspection regimes under the control of the welding supervisor.

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D&H Steel general manager Wayne Carson and colleagues review work-in-progress on a pair of steel-braced seismic frames.



The crossed, axially-yielding fuse rod dampers provide coupling between the two frames when they rock.



The 100-tonne John Jones Steel crane on the right lifted each CBF as separate units weighing 16 or 14 tonnes. Each pair, when coupled, weighs 30 tonnes.



The view from inside the building towards one of the corners. D&H Steel fabricated the cellular beams, which accommodate air-conditioning and other services, thereby reducing height as well as costs.

At D&H's integrated plant in Henderson, Auckland, the welding supervisor is Heath Johnston.

"On each of the 16 brace frames, the design engineer specified 195 welds, both full and partial penetration," Mr Johnston says.

"Welding personnel had 100% of their work subjected to ultra-sonic tests for the first five welds. The rate was then lowered to 30%, with critical welds remaining at 100%.

"Currently, the industry standard is only 15%. The high standard that we are working to involves welder traceability, which we achieve by keeping Weld Maps recording who did the weld, what type, and confirming that it passed inspection.

"Our rejection rate, requiring that the weld be re-done, was extremely low. Our welders become highly competitive because they take pride in their craftsmanship."

Southern QA Ltd is the New Zealand accredited laboratory responsible for testing the welding done on the steel structure.

Senior welding inspector and welding consultant Brendon Isherwood says when he visited D&H in Auckland he was very impressed by the company's capabilities, by the management team and by the skill and attitude of the welders.

"They are very close to achieving, and certainly will achieve, the ISO 3834 standard. When welding criteria are raised to this level, you always get the best results from welders who buy in because they want to participate,"



A roof section is hoisted for the installation of the mechanicals. The composite decking is with ComFlor 60.

Mr Isherwood says.

"I've been to China to review and check their capabilities, and concluded that they can do the work but, because they have huge capacity, they feel compelled to move it by lowering the price.

Doing things as cheaply as possible usually results in a dropping of standards and a consequential loss of output quality.

"That is the critical point of difference from the New Zealand-produced structural steel — we comply with higher standards, with all that this means in terms of reliability, traceability and accountability.

"It's more than just a matter of passing ultra-sound testing — it's an entire management system designed to deliver quality assurance from source to end-user, for the benefit of the very people who will work in the buildings that are built."

Fletcher Construction project manager Eugene Duggan paid tribute to one of the key factors behind New Zealand's strength in construction.

"It was important for Fletcher Construction as the main contractor to be able to have a close working relationship with our consultants, clients and subcontractors. We have all worked together to ensure that this cutting edge building succeeds," he says.

**NOTE:** All figures in this case study were provided by Alan Reay Consultants Ltd structural engineer Doug Latham, Christchurch. On-site photographs courtesy of Fletcher Construction Ltd.



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# BT's Back in Time

Welcome to Back in Time, where we delve into our magazine archives and discover what was making news way back when . . .

## 20 years ago:

- The NZMBF was to investigate the "horrendous cost implications" in the Tauranga District Council's plan to impose land development fees on land developers.

Apparently territorial authorities appeared to have the ability to impose new fees under the Resource Management Act. The council intended to pilot impact fees for subdivisions and for individual building developments.

## 15 years ago:

- The New Zealand Master Builders Federation changed its name, dropping the words "New Zealand" and replacing them with "Registered". The change was made to place emphasis on the fact that Master Builders were registered as such.

Chief executive Trevor Allsebrook said "market research showed a lot of non-members ran around identifying themselves as 'Master Builders',

prompting the public to accept them as members of our organisation".

## 10 years ago:

- The 2003 RMB House of the Year drew a record number of entries — 556, an increase of almost 20% on 2002's competition.

The biggest increase in entry numbers came from Southland/Otago/Gore, Auckland, Nelson, Bay of Plenty, Hawkes Bay, Marlborough and Taupo.

## 5 years ago:

- In the space of a year, all 79 applicants for building consent authority accreditation went through a full International Accreditation New Zealand (IANZ) assessment to meet the requirements of the Building (Accreditation of Building Consent Authorities) Regulations 2006.

IANZ chief executive Llew Richards said a dedicated team of seven IANZ assessors had worked non-stop to complete the project.

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# Catching cold

Architect **Don Bunting** asks why we are still struggling to take the first baby steps into what is now, frankly, middle-aged technology?

**E**very time I catch a cold I wonder why science has failed so miserably to find a cure, or even an effective palliative, to relieve a cold's more unpleasant symptoms.

In an architectural context, I recently read a Frank Lloyd Wright retrospective by Trewin Copplestone in which he noted: "While all aspects of society and culture have seen dramatic developments, the matter of architectural advance has not been as evident."

You might say that as with the cure for the common cold, design and construction are areas of human endeavour that science and technology seem to have passed by.

Or, at least the pace of my industry's acceptance of available and viable technological advances can be snail-like.

At the turn of the previous century (yes, that's the 1890s — 120 years ago!) Wright and his mentor Louis Sullivan were already pushing the boundaries of current technology.

Sullivan was designing and building massive steel-framed skyscrapers in Chicago, while out in the Chicago suburb of Oak Park, Wright was designing houses containing ductwork for air conditioning systems and installing electric wiring, before either were common features of domestic construction.

## Proving engineers wrong

Move forward to the 1930s (Wright wasted far too much of his time in the early part of that century chasing after his clients' wives), and he was busy proving Racine's local authority engineers wrong with his innovative structural design for the now famous mushroom-shaped columns and perspex-tubed skylighting for the Johnson Wax Building.

Wright died in 1959, just before the first Guggenheim Museum — the one in New York — was completed.

It could be argued that both aesthetically and in terms of structural innovation, Wright's Guggenheim left Geary's more recent version for dead.

As an expression through design of the technology of the time, it was much more of a revelation than a series of random titanium petals.

Similarly with Geary's Disney Theatre, designed before the Bilbao Guggenheim but for economic reasons — and Walt Disney's death — was not built until a decade later.

Here, the form was based on Mrs Disney's love of roses, and the resulting shape was little more than a light carapace over the solid, rectangular concrete theatre box within.

Dare I mention style over substance? I can feel the

Why are we still using tools that were invented by the Egyptians in 4000BC to cut up and then hammer bits of timber together, or to place bricks one on top of the other? Where is the serious development of off-site construction techniques?

architectural arrows piercing my back as I type.

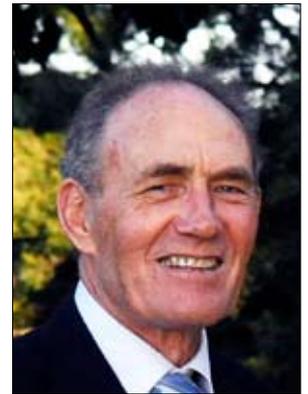
So where are we in a technological sense today? I first heard about Building Information Modelling (BIM) in 2000 during a conference in Kyoto — and at that time the IA1 (now called BuildingSMART) had already been in existence for five years.

What happened? Why the delay? Why are we still struggling to take the first baby steps into what is by now, frankly, middle-aged technology?

## Brave enough

If we were brave enough we could revolutionise the design and construction of building projects overnight. The technology is there, but our industry is so disorganised, so poor at co-operative working methods, that I despair that we will ever see a truly modern industry.

We could, if we wished, take a giant leap ahead in design and construction planning, but we are either too scared or too conservative to do the necessary groundwork to allow this to happen.



I'm sorry, but my industry is just bad at collaboration — and without collaboration technological advances such as BIM simply won't get off the ground.

So is that the core of the problem? Do members of my industry just not get on with each other?

And why are we still up to the tops of our muddy boots on the building site today?

Why are we still using tools that were invented by the Egyptians in 4000BC to cut up and then hammer bits of timber together, or to place bricks one on top of the other? Where is the serious development of off-site construction techniques?

I recall that some 30-plus years ago, prefabricated bathroom units were all the go for installation in multi-storeyed hotel units.

## Stone-age methods

Today we seem to have reverted back to stone-age methods of on-site installation of services and completion of finishes. Why?

During my last year at the Auckland School of Architecture, the final design programme was for student accommodation on a steep site in the upper part of Grafton Road.

Ian Athfield's design was based, in his words, on somebody accidentally dropping a few dozen eggs down the site.

Each moulded plastic egg formed a perfect little student bedroom and study, linked together by dinky little covered ways.

Outrageous, impractical, probably prohibitively expensive at the time — however, it was an early hint at Ath's genius and, more importantly, illustrated the potential for employing factory-built living units.

Hasn't happened, probably won't happen. But Ath, maybe you need to get those eggs out of your memory cupboard once more.

# Leaky home owner's claim reduced by 70% for contributory negligence

Tim Bates and Katrin Saran Lee of Auckland law firm Legal Vision examine a recent decision in which the High Court was required to consider what level of contributory negligence ought to be allocated to property purchasers.



In assessing the question of contributory negligence in the case of *Johnson v Auckland Council*, the High Court considered whether a purchaser could simply rely on the issue of a Code Compliance Certificate (CCC) in the absence of a building report prior to purchasing.

The case concerned a property purchased in Takapuna on or about April 2009 via a mortgagee sale for \$3.91 million.

Substantial alterations had been carried out to this property between 1998 and 2004. It was accepted that the alterations were defective, and that the house suffered from water ingress issues.

Mr and Mrs Johnson commissioned repair works, as well as carrying out renovations of their own. The sum of \$1.925 million (comprising the cost of repairs as well as consequential losses) was sought by the Johnsons from the council.

The council admitted it had been negligent in carrying out some of its functions, but argued that the plaintiffs' claim should be reduced by as much as 75% for contributory negligence.

The purchasers argued that no deduction should be

available as they should be entitled to rely on a CCC issued by the council.

## Principles of contributory negligence

Judge Woodhouse held that there is no need to prove that the plaintiffs (in this case, the purchasers) owed a duty of care before a finding of contributory negligence can be made, as long as the plaintiffs' fault is proved.

When a plaintiff is part author of his own misfortune, the plaintiff cannot call on another to compensate it in full. The plaintiffs are held to an objective standard of care. The contributory negligence need only contribute to the damage, and not the event.

## Findings

Judge Woodhouse rejected the plaintiffs' proposition that if a plaintiff relies upon a CCC issued negligently by the council, then it cannot be liable for contributory negligence. The only thing of consequence that the plaintiffs had to rely upon was the CCC.

However, that CCC was issued only in respect of a small part of the building work, and not the entire building works that had been carried out.

The plaintiffs knew of the widespread problem with leaky homes in New Zealand, were alert to those issues at the time of purchase, and took a calculated risk in proceeding with the purchase.

Furthermore, the plaintiffs could have inspected council records which would have established that proceeding on the assurance provided by the CCC was foolhardy.

There were warning signs as well, such as the 50% drop in purchase price, and the fact that usual warranties about building work carried out were removed from the sale and purchase agreement. Judge Woodhouse found that the plaintiffs were contributorily negligent.

## Apportionment

In terms of apportionment, the two factors to take into account were causative potency and blame worthiness. Judge Woodhouse found a 70% reduction, and outlined the following factors as relevant in reaching this decision:

- The plaintiffs proceeded with purchase, and price

was a subordinate issue to purchasing the property (causative potency), and

- The plaintiffs proceeded with \$1 million worth of interior renovation before addressing the reclad requirements (blame worthiness).

The plaintiffs were buying at a mortgagee sale, and believed that the purchase price provided a buffer as against the risk. Furthermore, the plaintiffs offered far in excess of what Beveridge (another potential purchaser) would have, and raised their offer by \$300,000.

## Measure of damages where successful in negligence alone

Judge Woodhouse found that the normal measure of damages for negligent misrepresentation where no contract was entered into (such as between purchaser and the council) is the difference between the purchase price paid and the actual value of the property in its true condition, including the defects (diminution in value).

Using the expert valuation evidence, Judge Woodhouse concluded that the value of the house in a damaged state was \$0, and that the land value was \$2.675 million. The purchase price was \$3.91 million.

He ruled that the plaintiffs had suffered loss in the sum of \$1.235 million, being the difference in the two values.

However, since Judge Woodhouse found a 70% reduction based upon contributory negligence, the plaintiffs were only awarded judgment in the sum of \$370,500. This decision is on appeal to the Court of Appeal.

## Conclusion

This decision would open up all would-be plaintiffs to strong contributory negligence defences where they purchase from 2009 onwards without a pre-purchase inspection report. It also holds that diminution in value is the correct measure of damages for negligence claims.

**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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# Building Consents Information

## For All Authorisations, March 2013

<b>Dwellings</b>	<b>\$634,798,000</b>
<b>Domestic Outbuildings</b>	<b>\$10,808,000</b>
<b>Total Residential</b>	<b>\$645,606,000</b>
<b>Non-residential</b>	<b>\$308,486,000</b>
<b>Total All Buildings</b>	<b>\$954,092,000</b>
<b>Non-building Construction</b>	<b>\$15,769,000</b>
<b>Total Authorisations</b>	<b>\$969,861,000</b>

### Number of new dwellings consented

	Apr 2013	Mar 2013	Apr 2012	Apr 2013	Mar 2013	Apr 2012	
Far North District	11	24	8	Horowhenua District	2	6	5
Whangarei District	37	22	21	Kapiti Coast District	71	29	15
Kaipara District	4	8	7	Porirua City	11	10	13
Rodney District	69	88	50	Upper Hutt City	8	7	1
North Shore City	63	49	59	Lower Hutt City	16	7	14
Waitakere City	81	61	24	Wellington City	115	23	20
Auckland City	85	70	128	Masterton District	7	4	8
Manukau City	69	66	65	Carterton District	5	8	3
Papakura District	42	31	19	South Wairarapa District	5	3	5
Franklin District	30	40	17	Tasman District	21	32	16
Thames-Coromandel District	14	22	18	Nelson City	30	15	10
Hauraki District	5	4	2	Marlborough District	17	17	14
Waikato District	31	28	13	Kaikoura District	3	2	1
Matamata-Piako District	10	7	10	Buller District	9	9	5
Hamilton City	82	59	73	Grey District	3	3	4
Waipa District	32	22	20	Westland District	0	1	1
Otorohanga District	5	1	1	Hurunui District	11	9	18
South Waikato District	1	1	1	Waimakariri District	80	142	72
Waitomo District	1	1	2	Christchurch City	146	126	104
Taupo District	13	12	9	Selwyn District	111	111	45
Western Bay of Plenty District	35	9	10	Ashburton District	19	20	17
Tauranga City	45	45	41	Timaru District	16	28	19
Rotorua District	17	10	5	Mackenzie District	4	5	5
Whakatane District	9	4	3	Waimate District	7	1	1
Kawerau District	0	0	0	Chatham Islands Territory	0	0	0
Opotiki District	1	0	0	Waitaki District	4	6	6
Gisborne District	16	5	15	Central Otago District	11	7	10
Wairoa District	0	1	1	Queenstown-Lakes District	35	16	25
Hastings District	14	15	37	Dunedin City	61	23	12
Napier City	7	7	21	Clutha District	4	7	0
Central Hawke's Bay District	4	2	3	Southland District	4	7	6
New Plymouth District	22	23	24	Gore District	5	2	1
Stratford District	1	1	0	Invercargill City	7	8	6
South Taranaki District	10	6	4	Area Outside TA	0	0	0
Ruapehu District	5	2	5				
Wanganui District	10	5	10	<b>Total</b>	<b>1755</b>	<b>1475</b>	<b>1230</b>
Rangitikei District	3	0	2				
Manawatu District	6	6	3				
Palmerston North City	13	23	12				
Tararua District	4	1	4				

- 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

## What's On the Web?

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### Showerdome winner!

Congratulations go to Scott Dennison of Tauranga, who has won a Showerdome valued at \$276, plus a DIY self-install kit (installation by a trained Showerdome installer is available at standard pricing).

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