

## News And Views

January 2008

Yes it has been a while since my last update and during this time there have been a number of developments with the Garland Builders T.E.A.M.\* and the building trade.

First with the exciting stuff.

After a long search for the right person, and a prolonged focused pursuit, it is with great pleasure that we welcome Mark Puddick to the T.E.A.M.\* Mark has filled the role of Building Supervisor/Project Manager and brings experience, enthusiasm and that real commitment to team work and customer service that we are so passionate about. This important and time consuming role has been filled by yours truly since the departure of Ken, and much time and deliberation has gone into seeking the right person to become part of the T.E.A.M to move us to the forefront of home creation service.

Another addition to the T.E.A.M as an apprentice carpenter is Simon Wilkinson. Simon joins us straight out of school and provides the T.E.A.M with another great opportunity to train and create an exceptional tradesman with a professional customer service focus.

While many in our industry appear reluctant to take on apprentices, we believe that training is an investment in our future, and the future of the building industry. And not surprisingly, it is usually those who neglect to train apprentices that are the ones to blame their standard of performance on a lack of trained carpenters. Isn't that interesting!

We have also lost an apprentice in recent months, in the best way possible. In December 07 Jay Lee stepped from the rank of apprentice to qualified carpenter. Congratulations to Jay who continues to be a valued member of the T.E.A.M.\*



Above: Cole, our apprentice, dressed as a hot dog helping to promote Debbie's lunch bar

On the home creation front, we have a number of awesome homes under construction with others to get underway in the early part of this year. What slow down?? A proud recent achievement has been the completion of the home in the Bay of Islands. This is an outstanding home in a magnificent position and is a real feather in the T.E.A.M.\* cap. All

homes do have their challenges, and the location and engineered nature of this home certainly dished up a few bouncers, not the least being away from home and family for so long.

My thanks and appreciation goes to the T.E.A.M.\* for their 'tour of duty' when required. A special thanks to Geoff who spent many months away from home and to Geoff's wife Leanne for her support and shopping for the T.E.A.M.\* food. By the look of Geoff's fine physique there was certainly no shortage of food. Also a huge thanks to George for being a head down bum up stayer.

Another milestone of note is the completion of the Jensen home in Karaka. This was a complete gut and rebuild of a farm cottage and site foreman Carl's aim was to have this home ready to move in to by Christmas 07. A tight schedule was laid out to which I have to admit I did not think was achievable. To Carl's and the T.E.A.M.'s great credit, there we were on Christmas eve hanging the blinds, job done. An ecstatic and appreciative client - that's what it's all about!

On the industry front, voluntary builder licensing became available November 1<sup>st</sup> 2007. Eventually all building contractors will be required to be licensed with the Licence Class indicating what type of construction each contractor is licensed to undertake. Sounds confusing and at the moment it is. The aim is to ensure that all building work is carried out by competent and accountable people. I believe the proof is in the pudding, and regardless of what piece of paper a builder 'has obtained' track record and client referrals still must be the major consideration when selecting your builder.

I also believe that for the good of the industry, all must be responsible and accountable for their performance. Licensing may be a step in the right direction for building contractors, time will tell, but what about those agencies and companies that release, appraise, specify, and approve building materials and systems? Where are they when the proverbial hits the fan? Recent occurrences within the home building industry suggest that some building material manufacturers and agencies, including those in government are avoiding their responsibilities to the consumer. So should the powers to be not clean up their own back yard rather than shifting responsibility to those with fewer funds to represent themselves?

Back to the exciting side of life - in March T.E.A.M.\* Garland Builders will again have 5 riders competing in the Mizone Twin Coast Cycle Challenge. Otherwise known as the Tour of Northland, this is a 4 day race that provides some desperate incentive to train off the Christmas cheer. Thanks to our sponsors Gib, Franklin, Placemakers Takanini, Altherm/Premier Aluminium, Living Flame, Just Hardwood Floors, Cycle City.

Well we look forward with great anticipation to an exciting, successful and prosperous 2008, and some more regular updates of news and views.

All the best for a great year

Murray Garland.

\*Together Everyone Achieves More