



Bringing new life to historic church

► Richard Loader

Like so many beautiful old buildings in Christchurch, St Peter's Anglican Church suffered extensive damage during the series of Canterbury earthquakes.

With its origins dating back to 1858, the stone church is a sacred space, a place of peace and prayer on Christchurch's Church Corner.

Initially built in timber from Akaroa, the church has undergone many additions and extensions over time, notably in 1874 when Benjamin Mountfort was engaged as architect and made an addition in stone. His great great-nephew, the Venerable Nick Mountfort, is the church's current Vicar.

"It's absolutely amazing to walk in and see how the old and the new have been brought together. For many people they will not notice any differences and all the strengthening work has been hidden away."

Following two years of extensive earthquake repairs, seismic strengthening and modernisation the official re-opening and re-dedication of the church was held on February 28, attended by Archbishop Philip Richardson along with Bishop Peter Carrell.

Suzanne Price, Church Property Trustees (CPT) Recovery Programme Manager, says while the \$5 million project has been complex,

the integration of the new elements of the church with the heritage elements have been hugely successful.

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While Wellington practice Tennent Brown Architects were engaged as lead architects for the project, Christchurch practice Chaplin Crooks Architects handled all contract administration and the day-to-day work.

Christchurch commercial builders Higgs Construction was engaged as lead contractor and Suzanne says the success of the project was in no small part due to the company's site manager who presented practical solutions to the numerous issues encountered.

"You had extensive earthquake damage to a structure that had been built in stages over the years."

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The repair has provided the opportunity to modernise the church to meet the 21st century requirements of a growing parish.



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A long journey for the Parish, expertly stewarded by Suzanne Price -CPT, well supported by all consultants, and beautifully built by Higgs and their subcontractors.
Special mention to Ray MacFarlane, the ideal site foreman for this special project.
St Peters can now continue to serve the people of Christchurch.



The addition of a beautifully designed timber screen between Chancel and Nave provides a small chapel, named The Nurse Maud Chapel of Compassion, for smaller services.

Providing protection

For over twenty years Masterguard has established itself as a trusted provider of security and fire protection system services throughout the Canterbury region, MacKenzie Basin and beyond.

With Head Office based in Ashburton, Masterguard has branches in Christchurch and Timaru ensuring agility when responding to its core customer base.

Sales Manager Shane Walton says the company offers fire, security, and safety solutions for almost every aspect of the industry.

“If you require fire or security protection, we can take care of it from design, installation to long term maintenance of those systems. We also provide fire and security monitoring services either via our own monitoring centre or direct to FENZ (Fire and Emergency New Zealand).”

Providing Building Warrant of Fitness and IQP (Independent Qualified Person) Services is another specialty offered by Masterguard.

Within the Ashburton District, Masterguard offers locksmithing services along with restricted key system design and installation.

“Customers who choose us tend to be small to medium size enterprises. We’re often dealing with clients with multiple sites who require solutions, including compliance, across all of those sites.

“They like the fact that it’s cost effective and that they can call one person for all their needs.”

Shane says Masterguard provides a ‘one company – one solution’ total care package. “We’re generally with the client from design of their building and systems all the way through to handover and beyond. As the site is handed over to the client we will go back to them for servicing of those systems and building compliance management, as well as alterations/expansion over time.”

With a particular interest in custom designs and heritage buildings, Masterguard’s strength lies in developing bespoke solutions for challenging situations.

A recent project involved the installation of a fire alarm system in the refurbished St Peters Church in Riccarton that involved the use of infrared beams to detect smoke, so that the fire detection was unobtrusive.

Another project was for the Dark Sky Project and involved the clever use of linear heat detection cabling, wireless relays and special LED indicators in the large observatory dome that covers the antique Brashear Telescope in Tekapo.

“Weaved throughout the ridges of the dome 12 metres from the viewing platform is a 4mm white cable which is very hard to see and does not detract from the viewing experience. A wireless solution was essential here as the dome rotates near 360 degrees.”

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Restoration successfully combines old and new

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"The church has had a myriad of additions and those additions all performed differently because the structural elements varied. So we had to get in and rebuild walls that were beyond repair, retaining as much as possible."

The shape of the church formed a cross with the transepts running north and south behind the chancel that sits at the front housing the altar, and the nave which is the church's main body stretching from the main entrance to the transepts.

While the chancel, the oldest part of the church, suffered the least amount of earthquake damage, the transept walls collapsed through the earthquake shocks.

"Although the stone church looks robust on the outside, internally it's lined with brick, which is not as robust as stone."

"The nave suffered extensive damage to the southern and northern walls and when we got into the repair there was a lot more damage than was obvious to the eye.

"So the stonemasons completely rebuilt the northern wall of the Nave."

As well as the church's significant heritage value, a key driver for undertaking the repair and strengthening project was that a complete rebuild was not an economic option.

The repair also provided the parish the opportunity to modernise the church to meet the 21st century requirements of a growing parish, for no additional cost.

“The church has had a myriad of additions and those additions all performed differently because the structural elements varied. So we had to get in and rebuild walls that were beyond repair, retaining as much as possible.”

The transepts were extended providing space for new kitchen and vestibule that will be a community hub for pastoral, musical, social and educational activities.

"We also moved the restored Rieger organ to the southern transept. There's also space for the choir there too. Relocating the organ was a major project and allows everyone to see it and the choir, rather than be hidden away."

The addition of a beautifully designed timber screen between Chancel and Nave provides a small chapel, named The Nurse Maud Chapel of Compassion, for smaller services.

"The project has been funded by a combination of grants from individuals, organisations, the parish itself and from earthquake proceeds."

Suzanne says funding applications were submitted to different organisations for different elements of the church.





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The image shows a banner for 'Grant Sutherland Floor Sanding'. On the left is a logo featuring a stylized man in a white shirt and blue pants, holding a blue floor sanding machine. The background of the logo is a yellow sunburst. To the right of the logo, the text 'Grant Sutherland' is written in a cursive script, and 'FLOOR SANDING' is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. Below this, a dark blue banner contains the text 'TIMBER FLOOR SANDING & COATING • TIMBER REPAIRS • INSTALLATION' in white. At the bottom, there is a row of contact information: a phone icon followed by '027 433 4550', a laptop icon followed by 'WWW.SUTHERLANDFLOORSANDING.CO.NZ', and an envelope icon followed by 'SUTHERLANDFLOORS@GMAIL.COM'.




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The logo for South Island Organ Company is a gold-colored emblem. It features a stylized organ console on the left, with three vertical pipes of increasing height to its right. The pipes are decorated with horizontal lines and small triangles, suggesting a traditional organ design.