



# EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS

With industry leaders



**Graeme Huguet**



**My House**

DESIGN/BUILD/TEAM

GRAND GEORGIE  
2023 FINALIST AND  
10 TIME WINNER

2023

# ROAD

to the



**Adaptive Homes, MBI and ANC discuss the importance of Modular Building**



Special insert Helmets to Hardhats Part Three



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Modular Building in Canada

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Carpenters' Regional Council

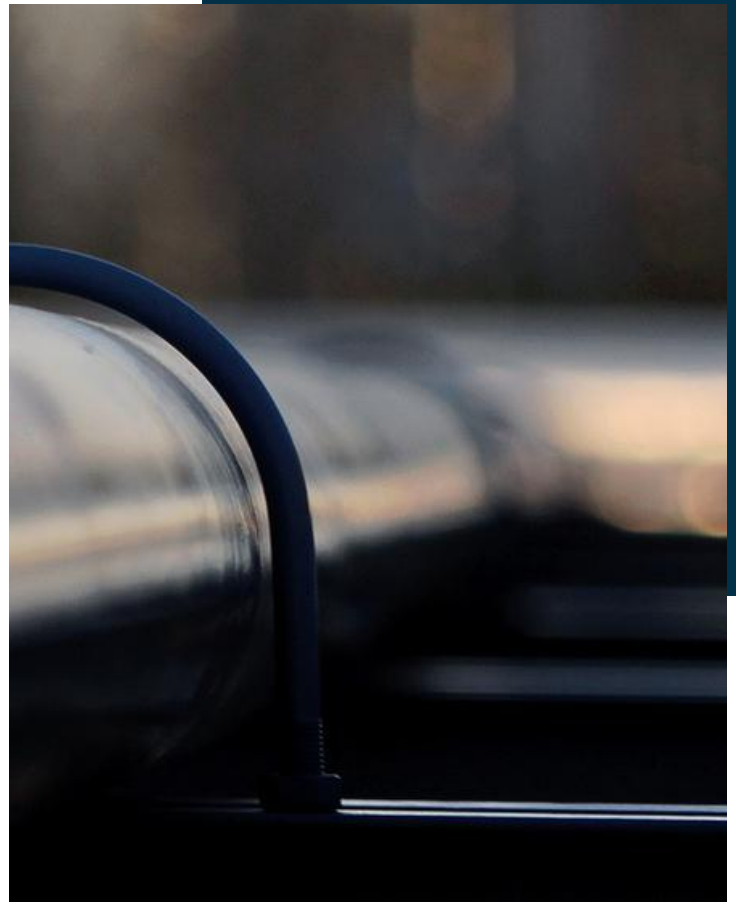
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SUPPORT OUR TROOPS

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# *Editor's Note*



We return, once more, with our coverage of Helmets to Hardhats (H2H). To reiterate, H2H's mission is to place retiring cadets and military personnel, and their spouses and dependents, into job opportunities within the unionized construction industry. Not all Veterans are elderly; many are in their 20s or 30s; they have an entire working career ahead of them. In part 3 of H2H's story, Joe Maloney discusses the organization's current initiatives and future plans. To supplement H2H's story, we are including a feature on Max Stalhbaum, a soldier-turned-carpenter, who utilized H2H's resources to make the transition from the military into the trades. In addition, Mike Humphries, the Veterans' Liaison at the Carpenters' Regional Council, and Joe McFadyen, the president of the CLRA, both share their perspectives on why H2H plays a crucial role in the Canadian construction industry.

In sharing this issue (the third of three parts of the Helmets to Hardhats story), we can make a positive impact in the lives of Canadian Veterans as they transition from military to civilian life.

To receive the ongoing story of Helmets to Hardhats, join our subscribers' list by clicking the box below.

Are you a Veteran who works in the trades? If so, please contact us. We would be honoured to share your story with our readers!

**[Subscribe](#)**

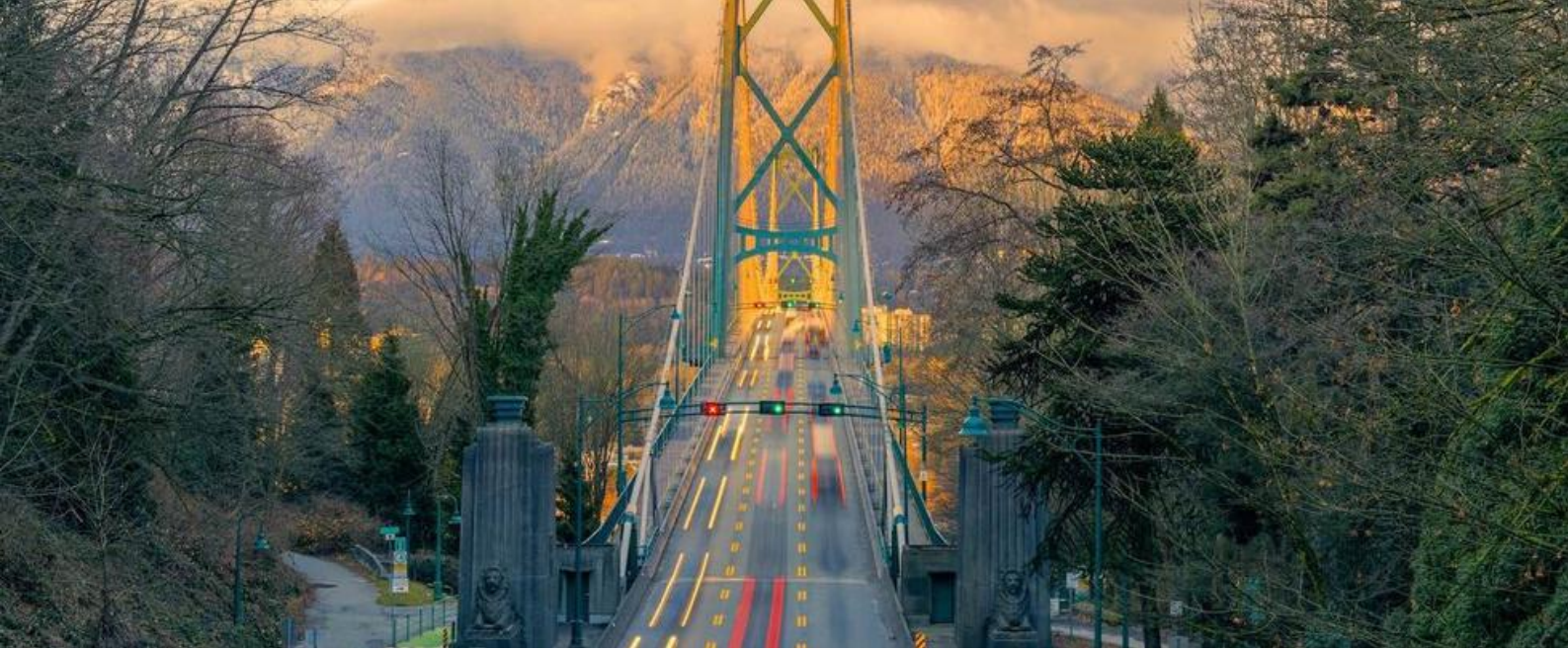
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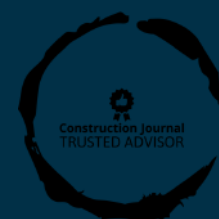


Our expansive training and experience with lifesaving protocols will save you time and money with a professional approach.

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Our philosophy: Everyone goes home safely to their families at the end of each shift.

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# *In this Issue*

This month, and for the foreseeable future, our focus is on homebuilders - and, though not exclusively, homebuilders in British Columbia will be receiving special attention for the next few issues. This is because we will be highlighting the Canadian Homebuilders' Association British Columbia's Georgie Awards as we march towards the 2023 gala in May.

We kick off this month with a spotlight on Joel Menelaws of Menelaws Contracting. Though Menelaws are not part of our Georgie's coverage, they are certainly stellar homebuilders, located in the Kootenay region of British Columbia. Joel talks to us about the perils and pleasures of building homes high in the majesty of the Rockies.

We then jump into the world of the CHBA BC's prestigious Georgie Awards as we walk through the history and importance of the iconic event. It is also with pleasure that we announce the names of the finalists for this year's awards.

It is only nature that we begin our coverage of the Georgie's with 10 time Grand Georgie Award winning builder, My House Design/Build. We sat down with Graeme Huguet to discuss his 2022 entry, which took home a Georgie for Best Single-Family Kitchen - Over \$200,000. My House is also up for multiple Georgie's this year, so we are sure to be talking with them again soon. A key partner on My House's project, Neil Yang from LeSystem, also sat down with us to discuss his own work and contributions to the project (there's more to come on LeSystem next month).

Of course, where would we be without our ongoing coverage of Helmets to Hardhats (H2H), and their endless work to aid Veterans in their transition into civilian employment in the unionized construction sector? We pick up where we left off last month by telling Max Stalhbaum's full story of how he transitioned from the military into unionized carpentry work with the help of H2H. Building on this theme, we talk with Mike Humphries, the Veterans' liaison representative for the Carpenter's Regional Council, who helped Max, and many other Veterans, find work in carpentry.

H2H's story continues on as we conclude our three-part article on Joe Maloney and the history and future of H2H. This is followed by an interview with Joe McFadyen of the Construction Labour Relations - An Alberta Association, which further emphasizes the need for Veterans in the unionized construction industry. Next, fellow Albertans, Chris and Troy from TLA Developments sing the praises of H2H and explain why their military backgrounds prepared them for the construction business. Finally, Commissionaires talks to us about hiring and changes within their organization.

Next, we introduce our first exploration of the world of modular building. It is our pleasure to republish John McMullen's article, "The Rapid Rise of Affordable Modular Building in Canada" (published by the Modular Building Institute's magazine, Modular Advantage Magazine, Sept-Oct 2022: 18-26). This article underscores the importance that modular building will play to meet Canadian housing demand going forward. Brantford, Ontario-based ANC follows suit, as Andrew Neill and Sabrina Gallo walk us through their history and methodology. Bouncing back to BC, Logan Ashley from Adaptive Homes shows us the versatility of modular building in a mountainous environment.

We also continue with more financial and tax advice from Fabien Gendron, an expert in accounting for the construction industry at Reach CPA in BC. Black & McDonald have contributed a detailed piece on some of their product lines and services again. And, finally, Dr. Sandra Larmour discusses the need for the construction industry to address not only physical wellbeing, but mental wellbeing also. In doing this, worksites will be able to achieve new levels of safety.

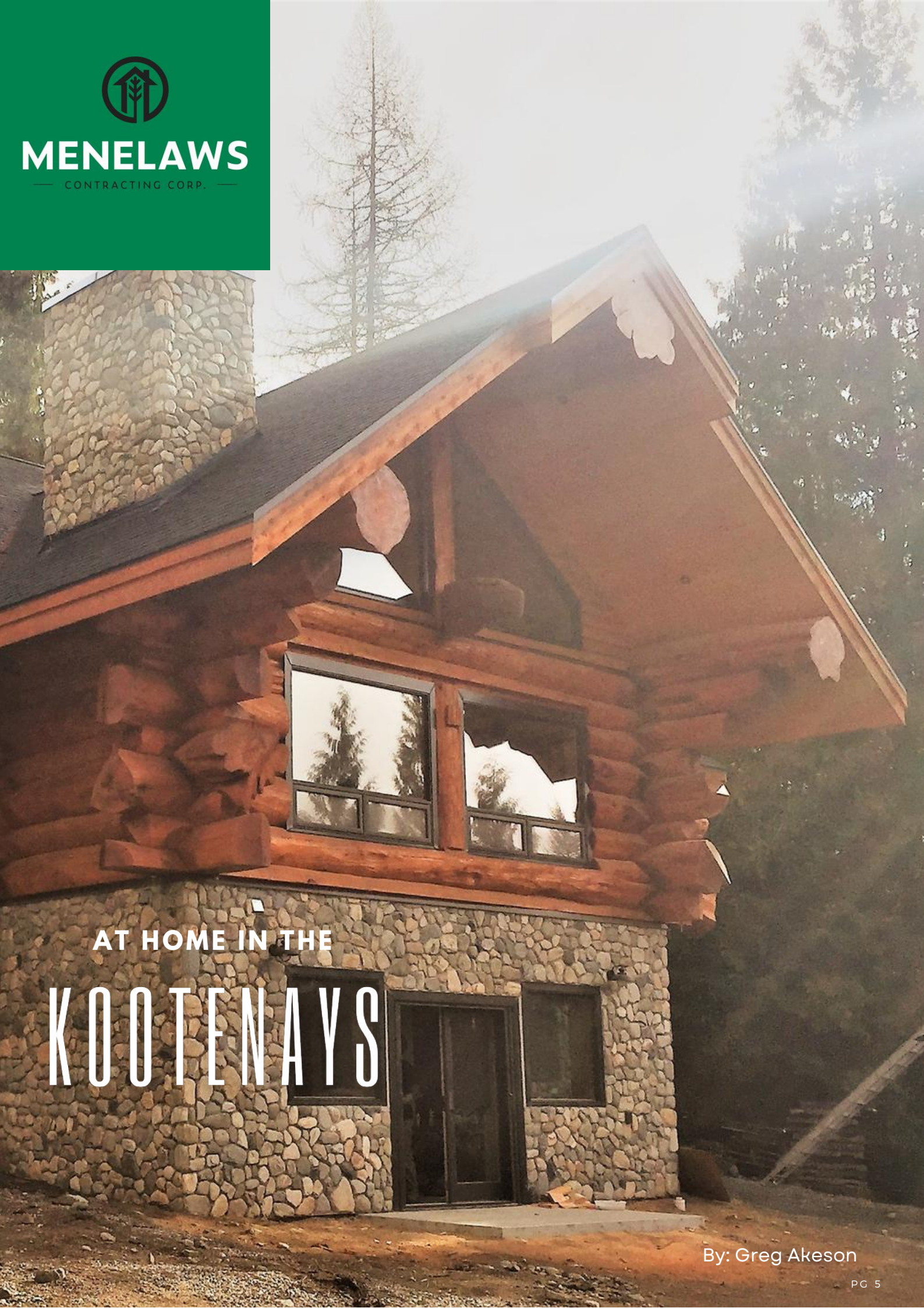
*All this and more inside!*

Paul Harrison,  
Editor-in-Chief



**MENELAWS**

— CONTRACTING CORP. —



AT HOME IN THE  
**KOOTENAYS**

By: Greg Akeson

# An Interview with Joel Menelaws

## The History

Menelaws Contracting is owned and operated by Joel Menelaws. Menelaws employs between 15-20 people and has been in operation for 11 years. Originally called K&M Contracting Ltd., the name changed to Menelaws Contracting a year and a half ago. They specialize in custom homebuilding and large scale commercial and residential renovations.

Growing up in the west Kootenay region of British Columbia, Joel's father and brother were both carpenters, so it was only natural for Joel to join in the family profession from a young age. He was, however, the first in his family of carpenters to begin his own venture with Menelaws Contracting.



## Business

Menelaws' business consists of around 80% new builds, with the remainder being renovations. While there are more unknowns that come with a renovation project, they are also more interesting and provide an opportunity to be more creative as each one presents a unique situation. For materials, they work with Home Hardware in Trail, British Columbia; they get their concrete from West K Concrete in Genelle, and they use Priority Concrete Pumping in Crescent Valley, B.C.

**Menelaws builds about three to four new homes a year with the majority of customers being from the west coast as well as the United States.**



**A project of particular interest for Joel was a multi-storey log home, built in partnership with Pioneer Log Homes, featured on the TV show 'Lumber Kings.**





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## Mountain Building

Joel outlines some of the difficulties common in the region: "cutting your forms around rock faces to contour the face of the rock, so that you can put your foundation in; a lot of drilling and a lot of different epoxies to anchor into the rocks and a lot of blasting; these are common things we have to do. We're currently blasting on a site. We've been blasting for six months to get a new build in."



## Mountain Weather

In addition to the challenges presented by the B.C. terrain, another challenging aspect of all builds is the weather. Returning after a weekend off to pour footings for one new build, Joel recalls the hardship of working in mountain storms: "all the footings were full of snow; it was a freak snowfall, but we had concrete coming, so we had to get 15 torches and we all melted snow out of the footings because there was so much rebar you couldn't shovel it. Then, the concrete truck got stuck and we had to order an emergency pumper, which got stuck; so we had to order another pumper to pump the concrete to the stuck pumper in order to pump it up to the job site. It can be very challenging!"

Joel enjoys many things about the life he has built with Menelaws Contracting. He enjoys working with his crew, looking back at the many homes they have built, and being heavily involved in the design process. Looking forward to the future, Joel sees Menelaws expanding and going in the direction of building multi-family developments.



## Employment at Menelaws

For those interested in being a part of the future of Menelaws Contracting, Joel says, "we've got great leaders, full benefits, great wages, and it's a great work environment that we can provide for anyone who is interested in the trades."

For more information on Menelaws Contracting, visit their website at <https://www.menelaws.com/>





## Volume of Work

Currently, Menelaws builds about three to four new homes a year with the majority of customers being from the west coast as well as the United States. Eighty percent of their new builds are designed by All-In Designs. Projects of note include an Airbnb at Red Mountain Ski Hill as well as a mix of new and renovated long term rental units owned by Menelaws.

## Log Builds

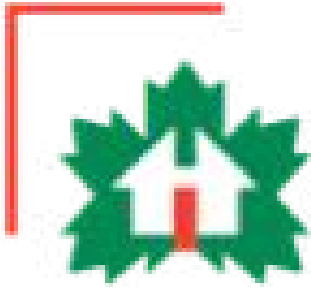
A project of particular interest for Joel was a multi-storey log home, built in partnership with Pioneer Log Homes, featured on the TV show 'Lumber Kings.' Menelaws took part in the assembly and finishing work of the home after the original had burned down. It was the first log home for Menelaws and provided a learning curve and the gain of new experiences.

The most common building style in the Kootenays is the 'mountain style,' with lots of big timber construction giving new builds a natural wood feel.



## Mountain Style

The most common building style in the Kootenays is the 'mountain style,' with lots of big timber construction giving new builds a natural wood feel. Building in B.C.'s mountainous and hilly terrain presents challenges that builders in other parts of the country may not be all that familiar or experienced with.



# CANADIAN HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION BRITISH COLUMBIA

**The Canadian Construction Journal is proud to announce our coverage of this year's Georgie Awards®.**

We begin with spotlights on some of last year's finalists and winners in this and next month's issues, and will then be moving into coverage of 2023's finalists in the spring as we journey on...**The Road to the Georgie's!**

## **About the Canadian Home Builders' Association of BC**

The Canadian Home Builder's Association of BC (CHBA BC) is the leading advocate for the residential construction industry, representing 2,200 member firms through our eight (8) locally affiliated home building associations. Our members are small- and medium-sized businesses who are builders, renovators, tradespeople, service professionals, and suppliers.

We are essential to supporting the province's housing needs and economic prosperity. In 2021, as one of the largest sources of employment in the province, the residential construction industry provided over 200,000 on and off-site jobs, over \$14 billion in wages and almost \$28 billion in built investment value in British Columbia.

## **For media inquiries, please contact:**

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# Georgie AWARDS



## The History

Georgie Awards® was established in 1992 by a group of industry professionals who decided to start a housing awards program, not for economic benefit, but to provide value to the residential construction industry and communities throughout British Columbia.

In 1992, entry into the awards was open to all builders, renovators, and developers in the province of British Columbia. In 2001, in order to manage and strengthen the integrity of the program, the Georgie Awards® was changed to a CHBA BC members-only recognition program which it continues to be today.

Over the years, categories, criteria, price points and square footage for categories have changed and have been adjusted to keep pace with the housing market. In the last few years, there has been a strong consumer and industry demand for enhanced energy efficiency requirements in new homes and renovations. As a result, that requirement has not only been added as criteria to most categories, but specific categories have been created for the demand. As the years progress and the housing market continues to fluctuate, categories and criteria will be amended.

**In February 2023, the Georgie Awards was named a winner of BizBash's 10th Annual Event Experience Awards in the Best Non-profit Event Concept—Budget Under \$250,000 category.**

10<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL BIZBASH  
EVENT *Experience* AWARDS  
**WINNER**

Best Nonprofit Event Concept—Budget Under \$250,000  
Georgie Awards Gala 2022  
Canadian Home Builders' Association of BC

## Event Recognition

The Georgie Awards® is BC's premier housing awards program. It requires months of preparation and garners much attention from media, builders and other industry professionals.

Previously, the gala has been recognized by BizBash as one of the most influential annual events in Vancouver in 2019. The event also landed a finalist position at the Canadian Event Industry Awards, recognized across the country, for 2019, and was the 2020 winner for Best Event Produced In-House by an Association, Board or Committee.

# **2023 Georgie Awards® will “Follow the Yellow Brick Road” to Celebrate Excellence in B.C.’s Homebuilding and Renovation Industry**

**BURNABY, BC (January 26, 2023)** – The Canadian Homebuilder’s Association of BC (CHBA BC) announced the list of finalists for the 2023 Georgie Awards® today. Now in its 31st year, the Georgie Awards® are B.C.’s most prestigious homebuilding, renovation, and real estate awards.

The 2023 awards will feature nearly **50 categories** grouped into six focus areas: Residential Construction – New; Residential Construction – Renovation; Interior Design, Merchandising and Landscaping; Sales and Marketing; Special Achievement Awards; Grand Georgie Awards®.

The highlight of the Georgie Awards® is the unique theme that provides the setting of the event and is eagerly anticipated by gala attendees. This year’s edition is sure to enchant as guests are transported down the yellow brick road to **a magical world ruled by a wizard.**

“To win a Georgie Award® means your company has been recognized for excellence in homebuilding with a commitment to quality, durability, the latest building techniques, and design trends. To be named a finalist for this coveted award is a great achievement,” said Neil Moody, CEO of the Canadian Home Builders’ Association of British Columbia. “This has been a year of change in residential construction with the pressures of a higher interest rate environment. It’s important for us to gather together to celebrate our accomplishments and look forward to the next phase for our industry.”

To be eligible for a Georgie Award®, the company must be a CHBA BC member, and the submitted project must have been built, renovated, developed, created, and marketed from January 1, 2021 – November 1, 2022. The finalists and winners are selected by a judging panel of out-of-province industry professionals and the results are verified by an independent accounting firm.

The Georgie Awards are one of the year’s “must attend” events for the residential building industry and the gala is a sellout year after year. A limited number of tickets for the Georgie Awards® Gala have just been released and are expected to go fast. Purchase your gala tickets now to avoid disappointment. Tickets for the 2023 gala at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Vancouver on **Saturday, May 20, 2023**, are available for purchase here.

The Georgie Awards® would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors, including Platinum sponsors, Telus and BC Housing. A full list of sponsors is available here.

**A list of all the 2023 Georgie Awards® Finalists follows.**

# 2023 NOMINATIONS



**Custom Home valued between \$1,500,001 – \$2,000,000**

- Grand Vista Gentry Home Builders Ltd, West Kelowna
- The Ottawa House Marble Construction, West Vancouver
- French Chateau Brickhouse Building Ltd, Surrey, Christophe Vaissade Designs Inc.
- Heart and Stone Meridian Pacific Construction Inc., New Westminster
- Samkoma Home Tree Construction Inc., Revelstoke BC

**Custom Home valued between \$2,000,001 – \$3,000,000**

- The Ridge House One-of-One Building Collective Canal Flats
- House Red Red Tree Creative Homes Surrey A2H Design Studio Limited
- Panamera Calvin & Collin Construction Ltd Vancouver Elite Premium Home Design Ltd
- Picture Perfect Hasler Homes Ltd Burnaby
- Lakefront Terraces Quiniscoe Homes 20/20 Ltd. Invermere Sitelines Architecture
- Modern Farmhouse Novak Contracting & Construction Ltd. Surrey



### **Custom Home valued over \$3,000,000**

- Bears Den Retreat Keith Dahlen Construction Ltd, Vernon, Mosiac Design
- Mont des Cieux Timberhaven Homes Ltd, Kelowna, ROV Consulting
- Modern Family Villa Frame Custom Homes Lake
- Denby Sandhill Development Ltd.
- Langley Fifth Avenue Real Estate Marketing Ltd.
- Hendry Place The Molnar Group Vancouver WA Architects Ltd.
- Acadia Townhomes Diverse Properties, Chilliwack
- Mayfair Zenterra Developments Ltd., Langley
- Foundry Phase 2 Miracon Development Inc, Langley

### **Best Multi-Family Townhouse Development (Infill) up to 10 units including mixed use**

- Wallis Ronse Massey Developments, Vancouver
- Westwood Homes Cascadia Green Development, North Vancouver
- Bridge View LIDA Homes Inc, Victoria Zebra Group
- Paramount In Mount Pleasant Lui Developments Ltd, Vancouver

### **Best Multi-Family Low-Rise Development – up to 6 storeys**

- The View-Hillside Traine Construction & Development Ltd., Kamloops
- 50 Electronic Avenue - phase 1 Kindred Construction, Port Moody
- Cinema Condos Diverse Properties, Abbotsford
- Nova Phase 2 Mortise Group of Companies, Surrey, Skye Marketing
- Natura on Forest's Edge Kerkhoff Develop - Build Abbotsford

### **Best Multi-Family Mid/High Rise Development**

- The Fraser Strand, Vancouver
- Foster Martin Landmark Premiere Properties Ltd., White Rock
- One Water Street Kerkhoff Develop - Build, Kelowna

### **Best Multi-Family Kitchen – New**

- Greene & Hall Everglade Development, Richmond
- Hayer Town Centre Hayer Builders Group, Langley
- Foster Martin Landmark Premiere Properties Ltd., White Rock
- Mayfair - Inside A Plan Zenterra Developments Ltd., Langley
- Foundry Phase 2 - D Plan Miracon Development Inc, Langley
- Monaco Solterra Development Corp., White Rock

### **Best Single-Family Kitchen – Up to \$200,000**

- The Ottawa House Marble Construction West, Vancouver
- House Red Red Tree Premium Properties Inc., Surrey A2H Design Studio Limited
- Black is The New Black Smithwood Builders Inc., Vancouver
- Oh Wow House IRACA Construction Services Corp., Coquitlam
- Serenity Artiman Design + Build West, Vancouver

### **Best Single-Family Kitchen – Over \$200,000**

- Double-0 Hideaway Welford Construction Ltd., Vancouver Area3 Design Studio Inc.
- QueenMary Kingdom Builders Fort, Langley
- Architrix Design Studio Inc.
- Panamera Calvin & Collin Construction Ltd Vancouver Elite Premium Home Design Ltd
- Top of The Tier on Travers Somerset Custom Homes Vancouver Beyond Beige Interior Design
- Modern Farmhouse Novak Contracting & Construction Ltd., Surrey
- The Canadian Home Builders' Association of British Columbia | 6



## **BRESIDENTIAL AND CONSTRUCTION – RENOVATION**

### **Best Single-Family Residential Renovation under \$250,000**

- Entertainers Dream Hoskins Homes Ladner
- Stairway to Heaven Finnish Builders Delta Sarah Gallop Design Inc.
- Kaleden Renovation 3rd Generation Homes Kaleden Express Flooring
- Inside Out Kitchens Colonial Countertops
- Pure Simplicity My House Design/Build Team Ltd Coquitlam Emphasis Design Studio Ltd.
- Dreaming of Paris Nofziger Construction Inc., North Vancouver

### **Best Single-Family Residential Renovation \$250,000 – \$450,000**

- The One With All The White Jawanda Developments Ltd. (JDL Homes)
- Surrey Concept to Design Inc.
- It's all about family reVISION Renovations Inc, Vancouver
- Happy Place Finnish Builders, Vancouver, Sarah Gallop Design Inc.
- Timeless Radiance My House Design/Build Team Ltd Port Moody Emphasis Design Studio Ltd.
- Divergence Level One Construction, Coquitlam, Triple Dot design Studio
- Pacific Spirit Level One Construction, Vancouver, Triple Dot Design Studio inc

### **Best Single-Family Residential Renovation \$450,000 – \$750,000**

- Genereux Lakeside Rejuvenation Keith Dahlen Construction Lake Country Sarah Watt Design Inc
- Repurposed Perfection West Coast Dream Homes Ltd. Maple Ridge
- Enchanted Forest Retreat Lacey Construction Harrison Mills
- Art of Living Westblue Construction Ltd. Vancouver Joy Chang Design Inc.
- Kitsilano Transformation Venture Pacific Construction Management Ltd
- Vancouver Phase One Design

### **Best Single-Family Residential Renovation \$750,000 – \$1,500,000**

- Grandma's House Geography Contracting, Vancouver, Designs by KS
- Party In The Back Shakespeare Homes & Renovations Inc, North Vancouver
- Bringing Back Home Hasler Homes Ltd North, Vancouver
- Forever Home TQ Construction, Vancouver
- Kitsilano Heritage Renovation
- Quinton Construction Ltd., Vancouver Madeleine Design Group

### **Best Single-Family Residential Renovation – Over \$1,500,000**

- Sophisticated Living maison d'etre design-build inc. West Vancouver Abstract Homes and Renovations Inc
- Heart of the Matter Spire Development Corporation Delta Sarah Gallop Design Inc.
- Generational Nest Meridian Pacific Construction Inc. West Vancouver
- The Maverick Isabey Home Kelowna, BC Isabey Interiors
- Okanagan Hardwood and Tile
- Black Shamrock RDC Fine Homes Whistler Capital Home Energy Euroline Windows

### **Best Condo Residential Renovation under \$250,000**

- Aquarius Serenity Condoworks Design Renovations
- Vancouver Designs by KS
- Pacific Rim Cabinets
- View Royale Lower Coast Building Group
- West Vancouver Flatwater Finishes
- Picture Perfect Gaia Developments Ltd., Vancouver
- Station Hill Enzo Design Build Inc, Burnaby
- False Creek Views Enzo Design Build Inc. Vancouver
- Parisian Blues Level One Construction Vancouver Triple Dot Design Studio
- The Canadian Home Builders' Association of British Columbia | 8



### **Best Condo Residential Renovation under \$250,000–\$450,000**

- Marinaside Light Condoworks Design Renovations, Vancouver Form Collective
- Sea to Sky Shakespeare Homes & Renovations Inc, West Vancouver
- Dockside Views TQ Construction Richmond Designs by KS
- Harbour Haven Rodrozen Design + Build, Vancouver
- Nautical Dreaming Rodrozen Design + Build, Vancouver

### **Best Condo Residential Renovation under \$450,000–\$750,000**

- Perfect Balance maison d'être design-build inc., Vancouver Ian McLean Architecture
- Coal Harbour Class VictorEric Design + Build, Vancouver

### **Best Condo Residential Renovation between \$750,000–\$1,500,000**

- Pacific Penthouse at Yaletown Bayview Construction Ltd., Vancouver
- In the Clouds with Cardero DNY Enterprizes, Vancouver Beyond Beige Interior Design
- Soiree Suite Spot Sitka Coast Construction Inc., Vancouver

### **Best Kitchen Renovation under \$150,000**

- East Van Special Smithwood Builders Inc., Vancouver
- Industrial Modern Smithwood Builders Inc., Vancouver
- Happy Place Finnish Builders, Vancouver Sarah Gallop Design Inc.
- Forever Home TQ Construction, Vancouver
- Opening Lines Roadhouse Homes Ltd, Vancouver

### **Best Kitchen Renovation over \$150,000**

- Genereux Lakeside Rejuvenation Keith Dahlen Construction Ltd Lake Country Sarah Watt Design Inc
- Home at the Harbour Alair Homes Cowichan Valley Ladysmith
- Heart of the Matter Spire Development Corporation Delta Sarah Gallop Design Inc.
- The Maverick Isabey Home Kelowna Isabey Interiors
- EMCO
- Soiree Suite Spot Sitka Coast Construction Inc., Vancouver

## **INTERIOR DESIGN, MERCHANDISING AND LANDSCAPING – NEW OR RENOVATION**

### **Best Master Suite – Up to \$125,000**

- Back to the Future Alairhomes, White Rock Surrey Evans Design
- Oh Wow House IRACA Construction Services Corp., Coquitlam
- Serenity Artiman Design + Build West, Vancouver
- Lakefront Terraces Quiniscoe Homes 20/20 Ltd. Invermere
- Modern Farmhouse Novak Contracting & Construction Ltd. Surrey

### **Best Master Suite – Over \$125,000**

- Temporary Classic - Master
- Suite Renovation
- Villamar Central Saanich
- Heart of the Matter Spire Development Corporation Delta Sarah Gallop Design Inc.
- The Inlet House Karly Kristina Design Port Moody Marcraft Homes
- The Maverick Isabey Interiors Kelowna Isabey Home
- Green Triangle
- In the Clouds with Cardero Beyond Beige Interior Design Vancouver DNY Enterprizes

### **Best Any Room – New or Renovation**

- Project Company Name Location Associate Companies
- Contemporary Alpine Estate – Living Room
- Vision Pacific Contracting Ltd., Whistler Innotech Windows & Doors
- ~~CSI-All Things Stone~~
- Pacific Penthouse Atrium at Yaletown
- Bayview Construction Ltd., Vancouver
- Perfect Pairings West Coast Dream Homes Ltd., Surrey
- Art of Living Joy Chang Design Inc., Vancouver, Westblue Construction
- The Inlet House – Beachside Room
- Marcraft Homes Ltd., Port Moody, Karly Kristina Design
- The Maverick Isabey Interiors, Kelowna, Isabey Home
- Green Triangle

### **Best Interior Design Display Suite – Single-Family or Multi-Family Production**

- Frame by Hayer Builders Group Hayer Builders Group Langley
- Hayer Town Centre Hayer Builders Group Langley
- PURA Adera Development Corporation
- Park & Maven Jayen Properties Surrey
- Hazelwood Hungerford Properties Surrey Zail Properties
- Fifth Avenue Real Estate Marketing Ltd.
- Foundry Phase 2 D Plan Miracon Development Inc Langley

### **Best Interior Design Custom Residence – New or Renovation**

- Genereux Lakeside Rejuvenation Keith Dahlen Construction Ltd, Lake Country, Sarah Watt Design Inc
- The Ridge House One-of-One Building Collective Canal Flats
- The Inlet House Karly Kristina Design, Port Moody Marcraft Homes Ltd
- The Maverick Isabey Interiors, Kelowna Isabey Home
- Okanagan Hardwood and Tile
- Samkoma Home Tree Construction, Revelstoke
- Southridge Modern Cottage Heirloom Projects Ltd., Langley

### **Best Innovative Feature – New or Renovation**

- Mont des Cieux Hybrid Elevator Inc., Kelowna Timberhaven Homes Ltd.
- Crescent Beach Residence – Log Bench Marino General Contracting Ltd., Surrey
- Black is The New Black Smithwood Builders Inc., Vancouver
- Pacific Penthouse Livingwall at Yaletown
- Bayview Construction Ltd.
- City Vistas LIDA Homes Inc, Victoria
- Lakefront Terraces (Cabana) Quiniscoe Homes 20/20 Ltd.
- Invermere

### **Best Landscape – New or Renovation**

- Denby Sandhill Development Ltd. Langley Fifth Avenue Real Estate Marketing Ltd.
- Riding the Wave Into the Future Of Landscape
- The Great Canadian Landscaping Company
- North Vancouver Goldcon Construction
- Urban Oasis The Great Canadian Landscaping Company
- West Vancouver CCI Renovations



### **Best Landscape – New or Renovation**

- Denby Sandhill Development Ltd. Langley Fifth Avenue Real Estate Marketing Ltd.
- Riding the Wave Into the Future Of Landscape
- The Great Canadian Landscaping Company
- North Vancouver Goldcon Construction
- Urban Oasis The Great Canadian Landscaping Company
- West Vancouver CCI Renovations

### **Best Outdoor Living Space – New or Renovation**

- Mont des Cieux Timberhaven Homes Ltd Kelowna ROV Consulting
- Crescent Beach Residence Marino General Contracting Ltd. Surrey
- Decked Out Studio Smithwood Builders Inc. Lions Bay
- Sitting On Top of the World
- Lower Coast Building Group West Vancouver Flatwater Finishes
- Rainforest Electrical and Solar
- QueenMary Kingdom Builders Fort Langley Architrix Design Studio Inc.

### **SALES AND MARKETING – Best Project Identity**

- Southlands Tsawwassen Century Group Tsawwassen Southlands Tsawwassen
- Assembly Trillium Project Management Ltd. Vancouver Assembly
- Ōku Ulmus Development Vancouver Ōku
- One Water Street Kerkhoff Develop – Build Kelowna One Water Street
- Natura on Forest's Edge Kerkhoff Develop – Build Abbotsford Natura on Forest's Edge Best Advertising Campaign
- NEST Chard Development Victoria NEST
- Hayer Town Centre Hayer Builders Group Langley Hayer Town Centre
- INNOVA Cascadia Green Development North Vancouver INNOVA
- Assembly Trillium Project Management Ltd. Vancouver Assembly
- Park & Maven Jayen Properties Surrey Park & Maven
- Monaco Solterra Development Corp. White Rock Monaco

### **Best Sales Centre**

- Alina Strand West Coquitlam Alina
- Hayer Town Centre Hayer Builders Group Langley Hayer Town Centre
- Southlands Tsawwassen Century Group Tsawwassen Southlands Tsawwassen
- Assembly Trillium Project Management Ltd. Vancouver Assembly
- Natura on Forest's Edge Kerkhoff Develop – Build Abbotsford Natura on Forest's Edge
- Best Corporate/Project Website
- NEST Chard Development Victoria
- Assembly Trillium Project Management Ltd. Vancouver
- Hayer Town Centre Hayer Builders Group Langley
- Unison Skye Marketing Langley Mortise Group of Companies
- Park & Maven Jayen Properties Surrey
- Monaco Solterra Development Corp. White Rock

### **SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS – Best Environmental Initiative**

- Grandma's House Geography Contracting Vancouver Designs by KS
- City Vistas LIDA Homes Inc Victoria
- Southlands Tsawwassen Century Group Tsawwassen
- Past Present Future Alleylane Homes Vancouver
- Foundry Phase 2 Miracon Development Inc Langle

### **Best Energy Labelled Home – Custom**

- Island View LIDA Homes Inc Sidney Zebra Group
- Bernhardt Contracting LTD
- Quamichan Net Zero Made to Last Custom Homes Duncan
- QueenMary Kingdom Builders Fort Langley Architrix Design Studio Inc.
- Picture Perfect Hasler Homes Ltd Burnaby

### **Best Innovative Feature – New or Renovation**

- Mont des Cieux Hybrid Elevator Inc., Kelowna Timberhaven Homes Ltd.
- Crescent Beach Residence - Log Bench Marino General Contracting Ltd., Surrey
- Black is The New Black Smithwood Builders Inc., Vancouver
- Pacific Penthouse Livingwall at Yaletown
- Bayview Construction Ltd.
- City Vistas LIDA Homes Inc, Victoria
- Lakefront Terraces (Cabana) Quiniscoe Homes 20/20 Ltd.
- Invermere

### **Best Landscape – New or Renovation**

- Denby Sandhill Development Ltd. Langley Fifth Avenue Real Estate Marketing Ltd.
- Riding the Wave Into the Future Of Landscape
- The Great Canadian Landscaping Company
- North Vancouver Goldcon Construction
- Urban Oasis The Great Canadian Landscaping Company
- West Vancouver CCI Renovations
- Modern Farmhouse Novak Contracting & Construction Ltd. Surrey

### **Best Energy Labelled Whole House Renovation**

- Black Shamrock RDC Fine Homes Whistler Euroline Windows
- Capital Home Energy
- Grandma's House Geography Contracting Vancouver Designs by KS
- Modern Cottage My House Design/Build Team Ltd Vancouver Capture Energy
- Emphasis Design Studio

### **Best Public and Private Partnership**

- 2022 Training House CHBA Central Interior Kamloops Thompson Rivers University School of Trades and Technology

### **GRAND GEORGIE AWARDS® – Marketing Campaign of the Year**

- Reunion At #MyBelmont Jennis Design Co. Langford Belmont High Street Development LP
- NEST Chard Development Victoria
- Assembly Trillium Project Management Ltd. Vancouver
- Hayer Town Centre Hayer Builders Group Langley
- Park & Maven Jayen Properties Surrey

### **Residential Community of the Year**

- Frame by Hayer Builders Group Hayer Builders Group Langley
- Southlands Tsawwassen Century Group Tsawwassen
- Mayfair Zenterra Developments Ltd. Langley
- Foundry Miracon Development Inc. Langley
- One Water Street Kerkhoff Develop - Build Kelowna

### **Custom Home Builder of the Year**

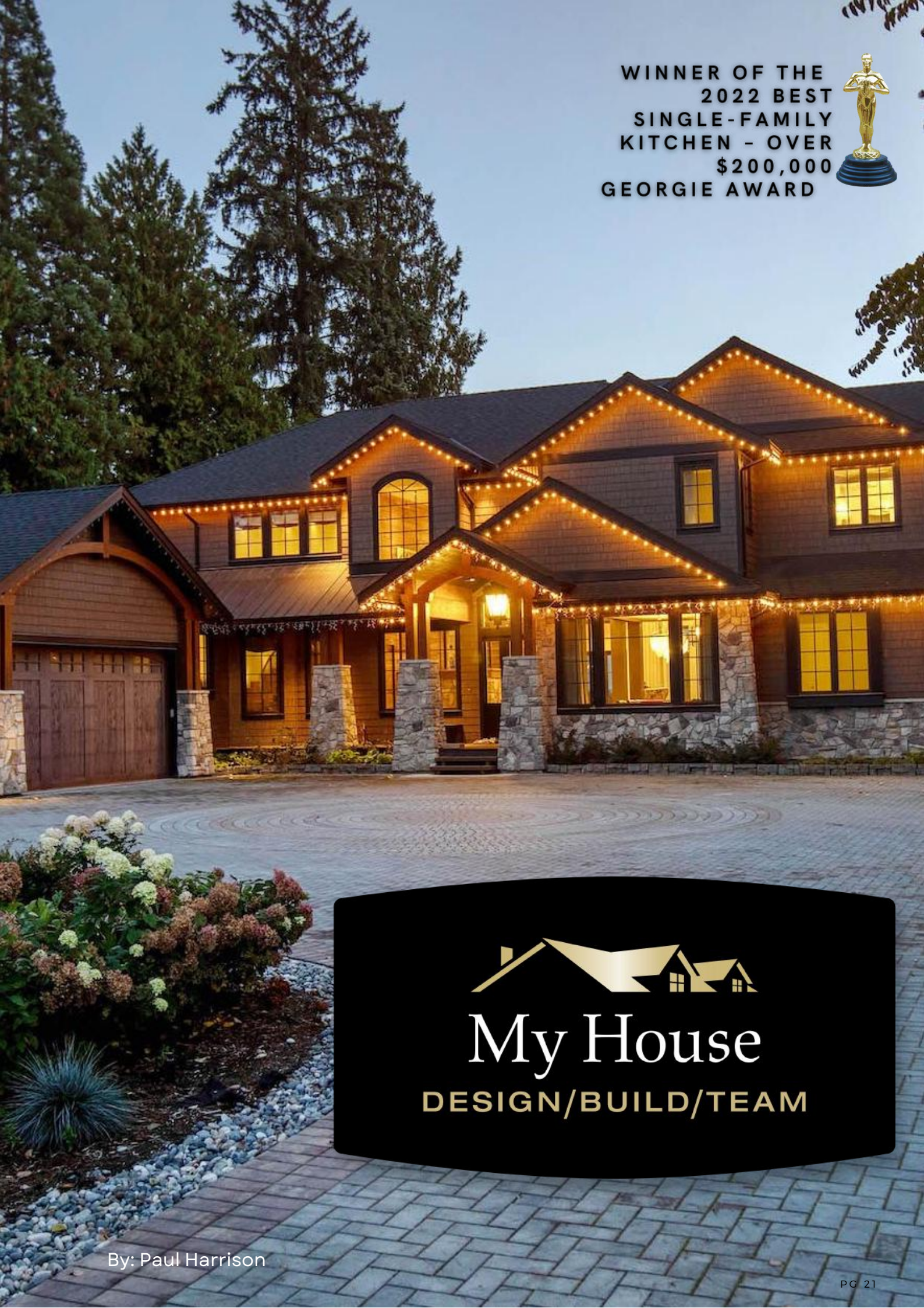
- Smithwood Builders Inc. North Vancouver
- Lower Coast Building Group North Vancouver
- LIDA Homes Inc. Victoria

### **Residential Renovator of the Year**

- maison d'etre design-build inc. Vancouver
- Lower Coast Building Group North Vancouver
- RDC Fine Homes Whistler
- Shakespeare Homes & Renovations Inc. North Vancouver
- My House Design/Build Team Ltd. Surrey



WINNER OF THE  
2022 BEST  
SINGLE-FAMILY  
KITCHEN - OVER  
\$200,000  
GEORGIE AWARD



**My House**  
DESIGN/BUILD/TEAM

By: Paul Harrison



## **From the Theatre to the National Stage: An Interview with Graeme Huguet from My House**

### **History & Background**

Graeme Huguet's story is not that of your typical builder, but then again, Graeme is not your typical builder. Graeme's My House Design/Build has been in business for 20 years, and in that time, they have won over 60 of the CHBA BC's Georgie Awards, including 10 Grand Georgie's, seven of which were consecutive annual wins. So, what is My House's secret?

Unlike many leaders in the construction industry, who took up a trade by following their father or grandfather to the jobsite as a child, Graeme studied acting, directing, and design. The bright lights of the stage and studio set called, and Graeme followed. While in show business, Graeme built sets for television shows, and soon discovered he had a penchant for real-world design. This discovery eventually led him away from the television studio and brought him into the world of architecture and interior design. From there, it was a logical jump for Graeme to study construction formally and become a designated master builder.

**My House has won over 60  
Georgie's in 20 years, with 10  
Grand Georgie's, including seven  
consecutive wins, under their belt.**





## Lifelong Learning:

It is fair to say that Graeme's unconventional entry into building gave him a competitive edge in the industry; while many people who followed in their parents' footsteps assume they know all there is to know about the construction industry, Graeme recognized a need to learn more about the industry when he switched careers from television to building. To this day, Graeme has never lost that constant drive to seek the best education for himself and for his employees to keep up to date on an industry that is constantly evolving. For example, Graeme, and the My House team as a whole, are certified Net Zero, certified Passive House, and certified Canada Built Green. These are more recent certifications, which required the My House team to attend numerous courses and develop new skills and techniques. Graeme's drive to remain a life-long learner has ensured that My House remains on the cutting edge of the industry.

## Building Process:

But beyond his own education, Graeme holds that it is an essential part of the job for builders to educate their customers and clients in turn. He explains the process through which My House takes their clients: "To begin with, we are a design and build company. What I mean by that is that we start with almost all our clients from the beginning; they haven't necessarily talked to anyone at that point. So, the very first thing we do on these projects is a feasibility test: whether it's a small renovation, such as a kitchen or a bathroom, or a complete house renovation, or in this case, a custom home. This is basically to find out not only what the clients want, or think they want, but also what their budget is and what their goals are. For example, is this [build or renovation] something short term or long term? What are all the goals that they're looking to accomplish? Then, out of [the results of the feasibility test], we can move into the actual design phase. If we're renovating, then we're obviously dealing with existing conditions in an existing home. If we are doing a new build, then we have different things to consider."

Turning to My House's 2022 Georgie award-winning project, Riverview Chateau in Maple Ridge, Graeme elucidates: "In the case of [the Riverview Chateau], we were dealing with an existing piece of property that had an old house on it. In fact, it had two houses on it. So, the feasibility study was about such things as: getting a survey, doing a site analysis, determining what existing structures were on the property, for example mechanical things. There could have been buried an oil tank on the property, there could have been hazardous materials from the existing house. But in this case, they were actually looking to subdivide the property. They took one of the homes and subdivided the lot and sold that property, keeping the other house with the larger property for themselves. Then, we went to the city to acquire a development permit. On that permit we proposed the demolition of the old house and the construction of the new home.

**"The very first thing we do on these projects is a feasibility test."**



## Planning:

"Then, in the feasibility stage, we get into the budget and all things they want to do, both outside and inside the home – such as mechanical systems, the type of wall assembly, whether or not they are wanting to pursue Net Zero or Passive House certification or Built Green certification. What are the certifications? What is the quality of the overall build itself? For example, the wall assembly, the energy efficiency, and in today's marketplace, you're also looking at things like solar, renewable energy, geothermal; these are all the kind of things we want to check off in the beginning stages.

"You need all of that, including a preliminary plan – which we do as well – to determine what their preliminary budget realistically will be. So, at the end of the feasibility phase, they have a preliminary proposed plan, they have a budget, and they also have a study on their property, or existing houses or house, which describes their condition and how to work with them. As I said, whether it's a small renovation, or a new home, we do the same type of process."



## Riverview Chateau:

Riverview Chateau is a palatial masterpiece, but with all the warmth of a family home. Maintaining its rustic wood finish throughout, the Chateau carries with it a mix of Canadian charm and grandeur. Whether it's the secret library with its spiral staircase and upper and lower reading rooms, or it's the covered pool in its sylvan setting, the Chateau's design is the epitome of the marriage of Nature and Art. The masterful engineering of the utilities room carries with it the same rustic aesthetic as the great room, with its imposing yet welcoming hearth. Even in several of the bathrooms, there is no sacrifice of the house's dominant wood theme; the tiling in one of the showers and around one bathtub emulates the appearance of wood.

"At the end of the feasibility phase, they have a preliminary proposed plan, they have a budget, and they also have a study on their property, or existing houses or house, which describes their condition and how to work with them."





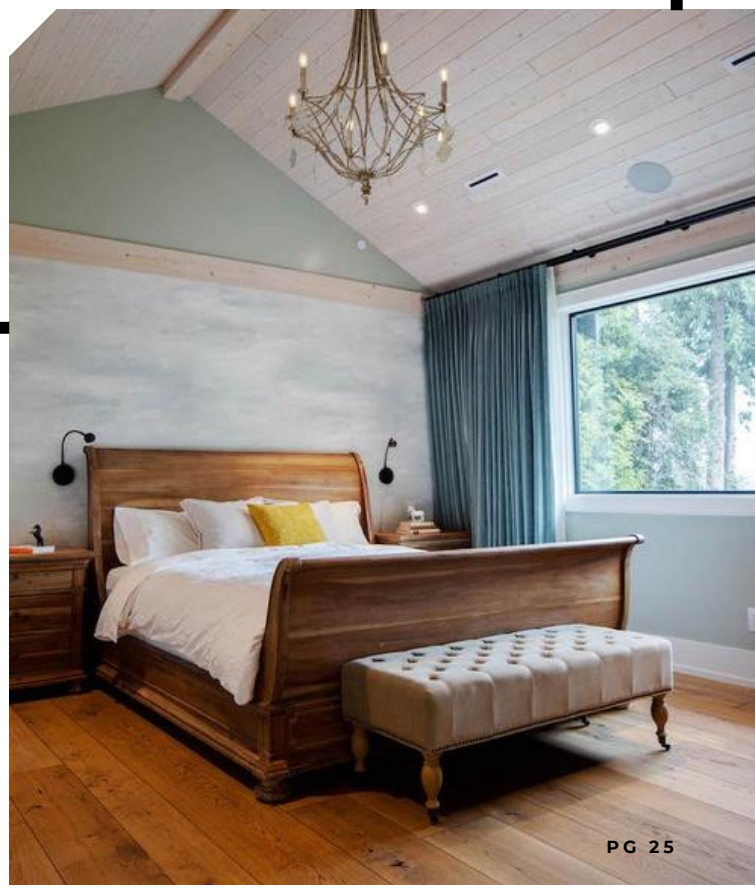
## Customization:

There are a lot of companies that will come up with custom pieces for the home. They will start with an initial product and make a custom version of it. Even artwork.” This is how Riverview Chateau can maintain its consistent aesthetic throughout; even the gym equipment is framed with the same wood-trim seen throughout the rest of the house.

When it comes to partnerships on the Riverview Chateau project, Graeme states: “We built [Riverview] in conjunction with LeSystem as the general contractor. LeSystem did a good chunk of the project management alongside of us. And the reason is, they happen to be an all-Mandarin staff and we were dealing with a Mandarin-speaking client. LeSystem work

## Partnership with LeSystem:

in conjunction with us whenever that is the case. So, they were involved right from step one. Neil Yang from LeSystem is the owner and project manager. He takes our information – in plans, in specs, even in budget and accounting – and translates it into Chinese. Neil Yang is an architect by background, [but also, he is] a builder, and a businessperson. He started as a staff member for My House for five years. He really builds a close relationship with the homeowners.”





## Built Green

Utilizing their various green certification, My House caps off the brilliance and beauty of Riverview Chateau with a commitment to practicality and sustainability: "Riverview Chateau is certified Built Green." Graeme explains just what this means: "Built Green doesn't just cover the airtightness or energy efficiency side of things, which Passive House and Net Zero address. It is a far greater scope. Built Green Canada also covers how you take apart the old house: how you take down the house for example. It also covers different types of materials – materials that don't 'off gas,' materials that are recycled, or are based on recycled materials, things that conserve energy or water, electricity and so forth. These types of materials are huge in Built Green [builds] but not really talked about in Passive Houses or Net Zero at all. So, we always try to educate homeowners on what all this means, and [try to educate them on] how to make good quality decisions that are long lasting. In every province we have homes that are built as disposable as a microwave or a cell phone. Such houses only further fill landfills. But it takes thought to build a home that will last generations. That's what we talk to people about."

## The Need for Education

Building further on how My House works to educate their clients, Graeme offers some budgetary advice: "most people focus on what they see. They focus on what is going to be seen. They buy homes by walking into bathrooms and saying: 'oh, I like that faucet.' They buy homes by walking into the kitchen and saying: 'oh, I like that sink or I like that countertop, or I don't.' Or they even go as far as saying: 'oh, I don't like the paint colour.' These are not the things that people should focus on in the beginning stages of their budget. They should focus on everything up to drywall. If they will spend the money (in this early stage) properly, then anything else can be changed at any other time. So, for example, a lot of people will build a house and leave the basement unfinished. But how was the basement built up until that unfinished phase? How was the insulation and drywall done? This really affects the longevity of the home, the energy efficiency of the home, and the longevity of that home for resale."





## Long-term Plans:

"Then there's certification! Most people are not thinking in this [long term] way. It's a very difficult educational process for most people. So, when it comes to budget, make those savings in the finishes because you can always replace them in time. People don't need to rebuild their walls, but they typically replace their countertops down the road. That's because they are easy to do. So, you always want to make sure that everything up to that point, (prior to finishing), is done right: your heating and cooling systems, your air quality, making sure it's a healthy home; these things are the most important."

## Educating Builders:

This commitment to educate oneself and one's clients is paramount to Graeme and My House's philosophy. There is no doubt in Graeme's mind that this education process is as important for builders as the actual framing and construction of the house itself is. He reiterates it often: "educate yourself and educate your homeowner. Note that I said the word 'educate' and not 'research.' Anyone can research. There's a lot of good things you can glean from YouTube and Google. But education is different. If a person wants to be a CPA, they don't Google it or YouTube it; they go to school."

Most builders don't take the time to go to school to get the classes they need and to educate themselves on all the aspects of the business and what their profession is. If they are a builder, then they can't just learn how to be a certified carpenter, they need to learn to be a business owner. They need to understand accounting, building or construction laws; they need to know all of that."



"Most builders don't take the time to go to school to get the classes they need and to educate themselves on all the aspects of the business and what their profession is. If they are a builder, then they can't just learn how to be a certified carpenter, they need to learn to be a business owner."



## Educating Clients:

Graeme continues: “As for homeowners, builders need to educate homeowners in all of those important areas, including how to follow the accounting on their project, what laws or what liabilities there are, what are the insurance issues. Builders then need to educate them on certain building practices. For example, you can renovate the same 10x10 bathroom and it can cost you \$10,000, or it can cost you \$100,000. So, what’s the difference between the two? It’s about educating homeowners on what constitutes a better building process, what is a healthy home, what is an energy efficient home.



For more information on My House Design/Build, visit their website at <https://www.MyHousedesignbuild.com/>

“Within BC, for example, we have many grants and rebates available, and there are also national programs for rebates, for utilizing higher efficiency products, including solar, better windows, better insulation, better heating and cooling systems. But there’s also tax advantages. For example, you can get a great tax rebate of up to \$50,000 for renovating a home for a person over the age of 60, and thus, making a suite for them for a second generation within the household. If you have any medical needs for children or for seniors, you can get another \$50,000 incentive, including a grant of \$7,500 to do those renovations. Understanding what’s available in the marketplace and how to take advantage of it is part of why a builder needs education, so that they can pass information and insights onto their clients...there’s \$5,000 just available from the federal government for minor renovations, like better quality windows and other similar things.”

With Graeme’s extensive knowledge of not only custom high-end building, but also construction law, certifications, investments, grants, and tax incentives, it is no wonder why My House has received so many accolades at the municipal, provincial, and national levels. With 2023 only a month old, My House has already been nominated for seven national awards this year. And, of course, they will be well represented at the Georgie’s in May with five nominations under their belts, including a Grand Georgie nomination for Residential Renovator of the Year. On top of this, they have many new projects happening, including the first Net Zero, Built Green renovated home in all of British Columbia. They also have many great projects, from renovations to new homes, that are up for awards for 2023 as well as ones that are still under construction right now.



LeSystem Development Group Ltd.

# LeSystem

## Riverview Chateau

Built in Conjunction with My House



**Company's Name:** LeSystem Development Group

**Owner's Name:** Neil Yang

**Location:** Surrey, B.C.

**Founded in:** 2016

**Economic Tip:** Lock in prices with trades and suppliers long before the build to ensure no more than a 10-15% difference from the initial quote. A good relationship with your trades is integral to do this.

**Project Description:** Riverview Chateau was built in conjunction with My House Design/Build Team. Neil Yang started his career as the in-house architect for My House, and they still maintain a close partnership today. The estate is entirely customized, including its own theatre, gym, and outdoor pool. On top of this, the kitchen took home a Georgie Award for Best Single-Family Kitchen – Over \$200,000. Even the boiler room is something to behold with its artistic and meticulously organized piping system, making maintenance easy.

**Building Tip:** Don't rush construction. Spend more time in the design phase. This is what gives a house character. Think through what your life will be like in the new house. This can be boring, but it is crucial for success. Taking the time to get everything in order is what allows builders to build a lifestyle for clients, not just a house.



LeSystem Development Group Ltd.

*Helmets To Hardhats*

**PART THREE**

# **SPECIAL INSERT**



**MAX STALHBAUM**

**CARPENTER'S REGIONAL COUNCIL**

**JOE MALONEY**

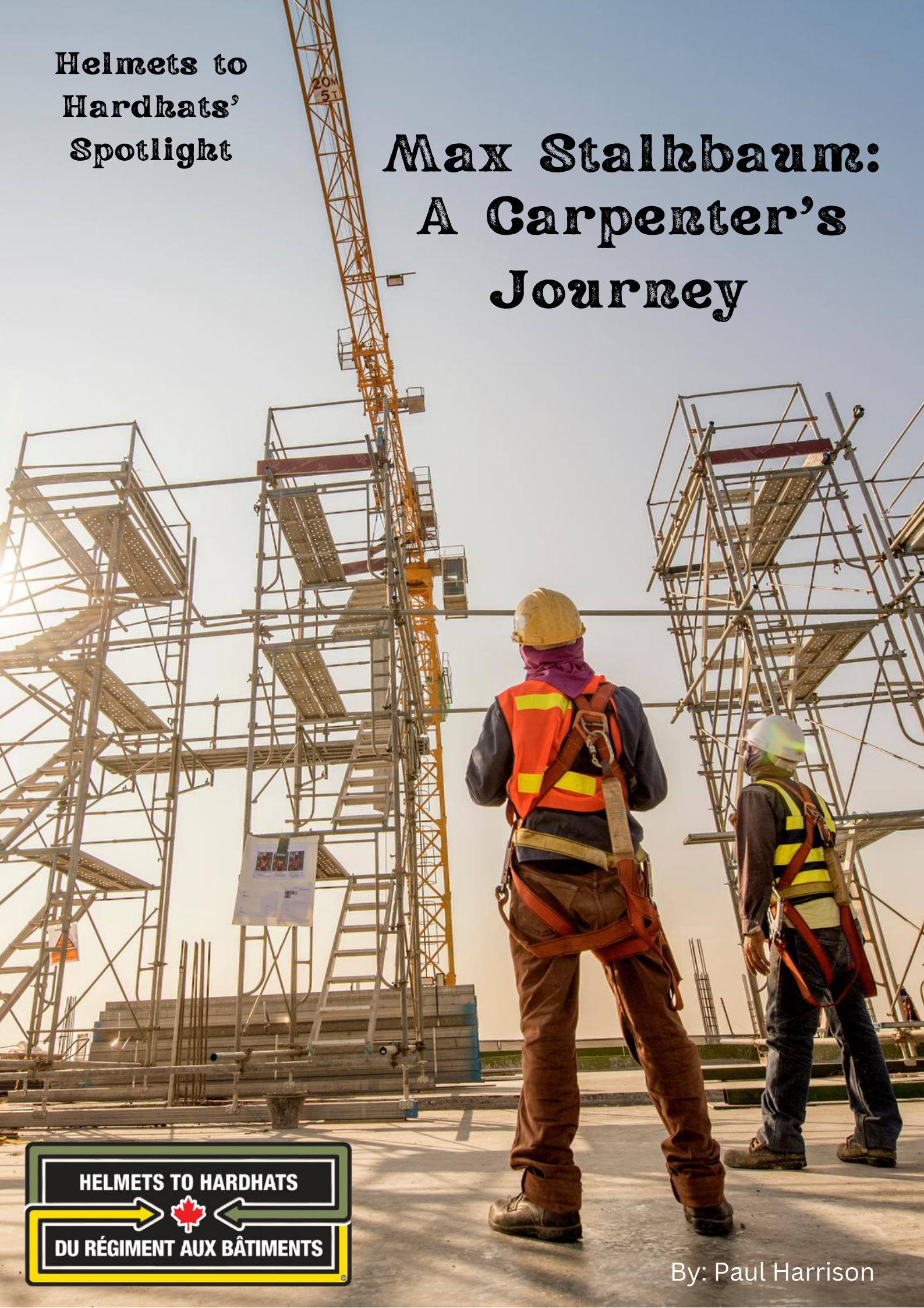
**CLRA**

**TLA DEVELOPMENTS**



**Helmets to  
Hardhats'  
Spotlight**

# **Max Stalkbaum: A Carpenter's Journey**



**HELMETS TO HARDHATS**



**DU RÉGIMENT AUX BÂTIMENTS**

By: Paul Harrison



## Max Stalhbaum: A Carpenter's Journey

### The Early Years:

Our coverage of Helmets to Hardhats (H2H) would not be complete without at least one detailed spotlight on a Veteran who utilized the program to help him transition into a well-paying, unionized job in the construction industry. Max Stalhbaum sat down with us on Thanksgiving weekend of 2022, to share his unique story:

Growing up in Ajax, Ontario, Max had a regular life. As a teenager, Max would work at his grandfather's marina, repairing the boats housed there. With his grandfather's tutoring, Max learned carpentry skills, and came to love the work he was doing: "[My grandfather and I] did a lot of wood boat restorations. I really enjoyed working with wood and seeing the process of something that didn't look good transform into something beautiful when we were done with it. That's where I got the passion for working with wood."

**"[My grandfather and I] did a lot of wood boat restorations...That's where I got the passion for working with wood."**





"I just wanted to pursue a dream I had since I was a child and I made it happen."

### Growing Up:

As Max reached adulthood, he used the skills he learned in his youth to find a career: "When I was 19 or 20, I started working for a builder, installing windows and doors. I did that for years. It was easy work, and I felt a sense of fulfillment doing it; you would start at the beginning of the day with something that didn't look too good and at the end of the day you'd be giving someone a completed house with new windows and new doors. It's a good feeling to be able to think 'look what I did for you. I hope you enjoy that.'" Eventually, Max moved into framing custom homes. "We built some really beautiful houses at that time." But despite the satisfaction Max was feeling from his work in carpentry, there was another calling echoing in his ears.

### Princess Patricia Beckons:

"I don't know exactly how I came to join the military. I had a passion for it since I was a little kid. I don't know if it was external influences that made me think that way or what. But I didn't have any family members who had been in the military. I was the first one in my family to join. My family was, at first, a little shocked but, at the same time, proud of me for doing it. I just wanted to pursue a dream I had had since I was a child and I made it happen." Max's decision to join the military was not typical in that he did not sign up at age 18. He explains: "the military seemed like it had a lot of structure, and I was very curious about that... but I did not join the military until I was 28. I'm 35 now so I've been out for 2.5 years. I waited until later in life (to join up), but it felt like something I really wanted to do."



## **Princess Patricia Beckons, *Continued***

So it was that Max left the comfort of hearth and home in the Durham Region of Ontario and headed west: "I was stationed in Edmonton. I was with 3 PPCLI (3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry), which was a light battalion. I was in a mountain company for the infantry." During his time with 3 PPCLI, Max learned many new skills. Obviously, he was trained in combat, but many of his skills were far more mundane, and applicable to everyday civilian life.

### **Life Skills Learned in the Military:**

Max holds that the most important of these skills was the ability to prioritize tasks. He explains whether it's simple things, like "brushing your teeth in the morning" or more complex things, like "thinking five steps ahead of where you have to be:" this kind of thinking was ingrained in Max during his service. "That has been my biggest benefit from the military; just knowing all these little things that I have to do before they need to be done. This makes the things I'm doing that much simpler and run that much smoother: to be able to have seamless transitions from one task to the next, like getting up in the morning, getting your bed made, getting ready for work, and everything like that. Before I was in the military, I made my bed maybe two days a week, and then, I'd come home at the end of the day, make my bed, tidy up – that kind of thing. But now I get up, make my bed immediately and put everything in order. That way, if you ever have to go back to your bedroom during the day, or at the end of the day, everything is in order exactly as you left it. I would say the biggest thing (I learned) was to be able to order and compartmentalize things – being able to have everything stored in a perfect sequence in my brain. I was able to do this a little bit before I joined the military, but the military definitely helped me to be able to concentrate on these kinds of skills."

**"I would say the biggest thing (I learned in the military) was to be able to order and compartmentalize things – being able to have everything stored in a perfect sequence in my brain."**

## Life Skills Learned in the Military, *Continued*

Beyond this, Max believes that the ability to follow orders and understand the necessity of rank and hierarchy are other important skills he learned while in the CAF. "In the construction industry, I found I related to [being able to follow orders]. I was in the construction industry before I joined the military, but afterwards, being on bigger jobs than I was before [I served] and seeing their structure – supervisors, down to foreman, down to the individual workers – it was a lot like the military: seeing how all those different factors work together to create an end goal. It made it easy being able to follow orders and listen effectively to your superiors. It made it that much easier for the people that I worked with; they love me because I can hear them, and I can understand what they're saying and what the end goal is. If I didn't have that perspective of structure and rank, it would not have worked the same as it did. I don't think I would have had the same respect for how important this person's job is to make my job at the bottom, or in the middle, or wherever I am, work, because it all works together. But having served my time in the military, where you have people above you and people below you, you understand that these people are all here for a reason, and their reason is to get the job done... All the guys work, and you are a cog in the wheel. It's like a well-oiled machine. Moving forward in my career, this is a great thing to understand; understanding rank structure – to be able to apply that as I move up to higher responsibility levels, or to a foreman position: this is invaluable."

**"Moving forward in my career, this is a great thing to understand; understanding rank structure – to be able to apply that as I move up to higher responsibility levels, or to a foreman position: this is invaluable."**



## Calm, in the Face of Adversity:

Reflecting further, Max adds that he's noticed that the military also instilled in him the ability to approach pressure with a kind of stoic resolve. As Max tells me about his preparation to write his red seal exam for carpentry, he states: "[the test] is probably going to be the hardest academic test I've ever done." Pausing for a moment, he quips: "But not the hardest thing I've ever done! There's another great thing from the military too! Going back to school, I see all the guys I am going to school with, and they don't have that same ability to remain calm, cool, and collected in a stressful situation, or in a situation that increases your anxiety levels. Whereas the military definitely helped me to learn to control my emotions and my thinking or thought process, while other guys get more anxious writing a test. But so far, through all my levels of schooling, I haven't had any issues; I'd like to think that maybe that's because I was in the military. Because they train you to deal with stressful situations and to be able to think easily in a stressful situation."

Max continues on the theme of stress management: "even at work too: you get all this stuff dumped on you during the week. Let's say it's a Thursday and all this stuff needs to get done (by the end of the week): our bosses are stressed about it themselves. But personally, I don't take any of that stress home [on such occasions] because it doesn't feel like stress to me. It is more a case of 'we have all these jobs; they need to get done; there's no need to worry about them. We've just got to get them done.' Nothing is the same [as the stresses of military work] in the civilian world, that's for sure."

## Lions, Bulls, and the Edmonton Oilers:

Of course, the military was not only following orders and respecting hierarchy. Max reminisces of some of the fun and exciting moments during his time in service: on one occasion, while training with the U.S. Marine Corps in the mountains of California, Max and his fire-team partner had ascended the side of a cliff. While in position, they received a radio call from a Marine Corps sniper team. Max and his partner were told to "look directly below, 60 metres." Peering down the cliff face, lying in the warmth of the sun beneath them, they saw a mountain lion.

On several occasions, Max and his fellow soldiers, were called to Rogers Place, home of the Edmonton Oilers, to take part in Remembrance Day ceremonies at a hockey game and at a rodeo. "As I said, I was in the mountain unit." Max reminds us. "So, they would always get some of their best rappellers to go to the Oilers' games. We did an Oilers' game where we rappelled down from the Jumbotron, right into the middle of the arena. We brought the puck with us and I gave it to [Connor] McDavid. We also did a rodeo that was at Rogers Place in Edmonton, where we rappelled down from the Jumbotron, and did the big Remembrance Day event for them."





## Lions, Bulls, and the Edmonton Oilers, *Continued*

Max recalls with excitement: "It was 160 feet from where we rappelled! We would have our rope stop about eight feet in the air. They were dynamic ropes, so by the time they stretched just a little bit, you would be six feet from the ground. You would literally just drop to the ground for the last couple of feet. That way you're on the ground right away and ready to move, so you can put on a cool show...We landed on the ice too! That was a lot harder than doing the rodeo show, where we just landed on dirt. Landing on the ice and staying on your feet when you have all your weapon systems on you without sliding...then moving into the centre – it was all choreographed. We weren't allowed to drop anything at all, otherwise they would have to do a commercial break to fix the ice. And it would end up costing thousands of thousands of dollars. I think it was something like \$30,000 to stop the show for 30 seconds! Needless to say, if you drop anything, it's a major faux pas. You have to land on your feet and then go to the centre and that's it." Laughing, Max adds: "After doing something like the hockey game, stress is easy to handle. You don't mind something like: 'we need four pieces of wood cut.' OK that's no big deal."

## Discovering Helmets to Hardhats:

Max explains: "When I left the military, I did all these programs they make you do, so that when you leave the military you don't just go and become jobless. They teach you resume writing, interview techniques, etc. These were courses you could take when you were getting out of the military. One of these courses included a meeting with all these different employment venues, one of which was Helmets to Hardhats. They played their video and I thought to myself: 'well that's great. I already have the experience and all the hours. I might as well do something like that if I need to.' It never left my brain after I saw their video."



## Discovering Helmets to Hardhats, *Continued*

Max explains: “When I left the military, I did all these programs they make you do, so that when you leave the military you don’t just go and become jobless. They teach you resume writing, interview techniques, etc. These were courses you could take when you were getting out of the military. One of these courses included a meeting with all these different employment venues, one of which was Helmets to Hardhats. They played their video and I thought to myself: ‘well that’s great. I already have the experience and all the hours. I might as well do something like that if I need to.’ It never left my brain after I saw their video.

“When I got out of the military, it wasn’t much of a thought to return to carpentry. I knew about Helmets to Hardhats, but [in the first 10 months out], I didn’t know if I wanted to approach them because I already had connections in the [non-unionized] construction industry. So, I went back to work about a week after leaving the military; there was no delay with that. But after some time, I realized that I needed something that had more structure and, in the long run, a pension and benefits so I could take care of my family when I’m not able to work anymore – just like in the military, where I had all those benefits and pensions. Once you don’t have that, you want it back again. So, I started thinking: ‘I need to look into this Helmets to Hardhats thing and see if I can get into one of these unions. Maybe I can better my career that way.’ It was probably ten months later when I called them. They had so many different options for where I could go, so I thought about that for awhile. And then I met Mike Humphries. And the rest is history.”

## Becoming a Union Man:

Max went to H2H and applied to join the Carpenters’ District Council of Ontario. “I was doing carpentry already, so [joining the union] was a natural fit. I figured that I might as well do carpentry at a different level. I applied with Mike Humphries and I literally got a phone call the next day! It was December 16th, 2019, when I contacted Mike. The next day he had me come in for a meeting and interview, and I was signed up to the union that same day. I didn’t begin doing unionized work until March 2020 because I had to finish up all my safety training and also finished some work for my previous employer to get a few jobs done. I could have begun working for the union even sooner and started with them in early January, right after Christmas, if I had really pushed myself, but it was a seamless transition regardless.



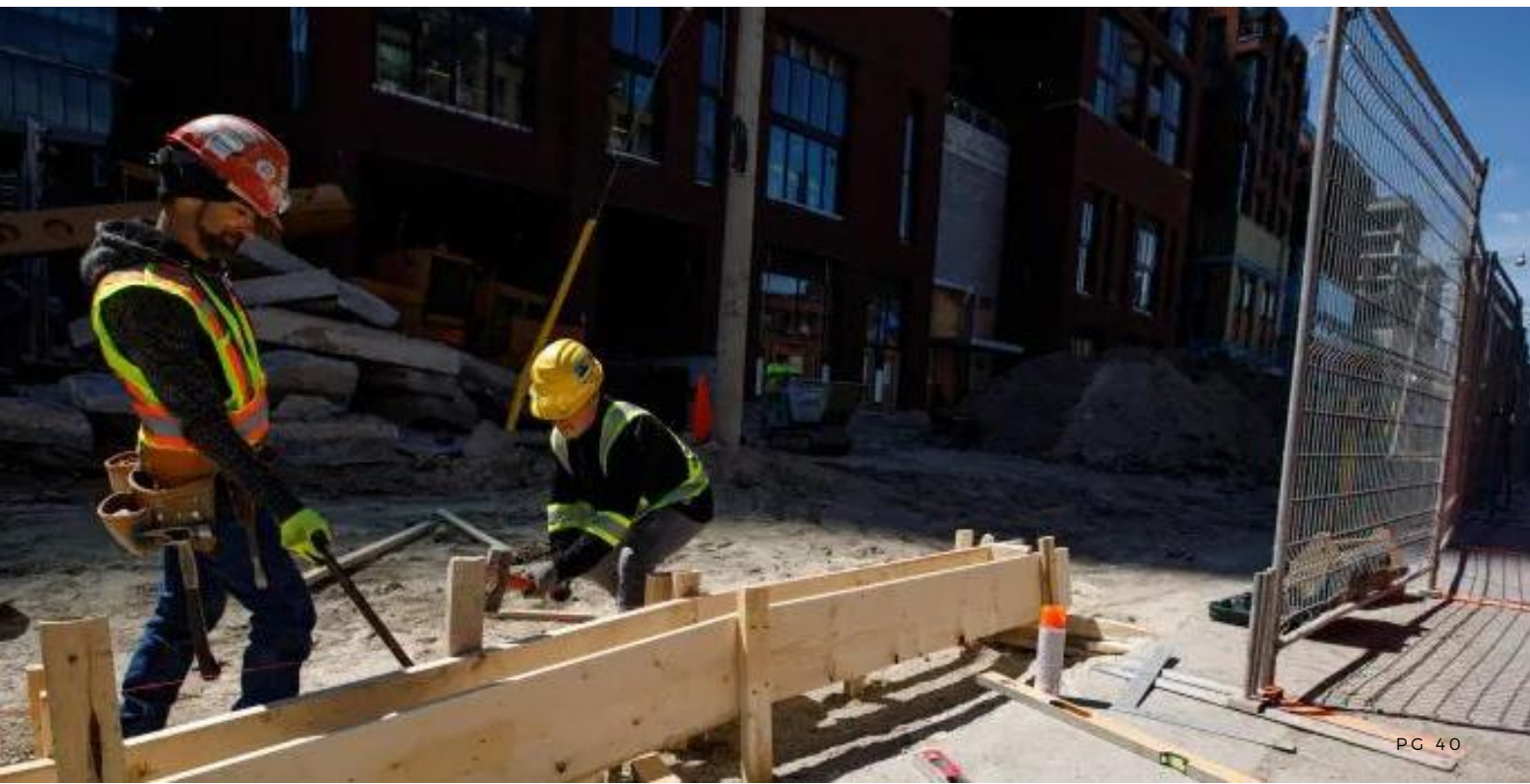
## Becoming a Union Man: *Continued*

“After I got into the union, and because I had a lot of experience already, Mike got me to begin working for a cool company, doing timber framing. This is prestigious work in the carpentry trade: timber framing compared to [the more traditional] forming concrete [method]. I did the timber framing job for a little bit, but then I reached out to Mike because Covid was just starting. Jobs were slowing down as there were no foundations being dug (because of Covid). So, I contacted Mike and asked if he knew if anyone was hiring and he told me: ‘yeah, I can get you a job starting tomorrow.’ Mike Humphries put me with this company, and they really liked my work. They promoted me almost right away. The company went from paying me as a second term to a full fourth term apprentice. Normally this would take a few years to get to that level.”

“From there I started working for a big builder in downtown Toronto. For two years, I did tons of work for them. I enjoyed doing the hours, but I was working so much overtime. I was working 70+ hours a week; I got all my hours for my apprenticeship this way. Now, I’ve just been attending school since I got all the hours for my apprenticeship. I just wanted to do all of the schooling combined; that way, it would stay in my mind, and I wouldn’t forget anything. Otherwise, you essentially do school and then you’re off working for two years, then you do more school, and you’re off working for another two years; that’s what a lot of people end up doing. I wanted to do it all together, so it would stay in my mind. Now I’m just nearing the end of my schooling. I have two weeks left, and then after that, I’ll be a full-fledged, ready-to-go [red seal] carpenter.”

Without Helmets to Hardhats’ help, Max’s landing in civilian life would not have been as smooth and seamless as it was. As Max’s story shows, Helmets to Hardhats was there to aid a Veteran looking for more in his post-service life. H2H put Max in touch with Mike Humphries at the Carpenters’ District Council of Ontario, which was in the same region in which Max lived and had him enrolled in the union within 24 hours. This opened new doors for Max, giving him better employment opportunities than he had had before. When he needed a new job, the union was there for him, and placed him into something immediately. This afforded Max with the chance to complete his entire apprenticeship at high speed, then put him through school at a faster pace, and be on track to earn his red seal. All of this was done in less than three years of first calling H2H. Max’s story outlines the way in which H2H serves those who served their country.

Since the time of Max’s interview, he has completed his final exam and is now a red seal carpenter.





# THE SOLDIER & THE CARPENTER



**AN INTERVIEW WITH MIKE  
HUMPHRIES FROM THE  
CARPENTERS' REGIONAL COUNCIL**

HELMETS TO HARDHATS

DU RÉGIMENT AUX BÂTIMENTS

By : Greg Akeson



## **The Soldier & The Carpenter: An Interview with Mike Humphries from The Carpenters' Regional Council**

Mike Humphries is the Veteran Liaison Representative for the Carpenters' Regional Council. His role is to assist Veterans, who are transitioning into the trade, anywhere from Ontario to British Columbia. Formerly called the Carpenters' District Council of Ontario, it was renamed just recently when the Ontario council merged with several other councils located throughout Canada's western provinces to form the Carpenters' Regional Council.

Mike is himself a Veteran and served with the 3rd Battalion Royal Canadian Regiment. He was posted from Winnipeg to Germany and served in Bosnia with the U.N. during the early 90s. He decided to make the transition to civilian life in 1995 and started an apprenticeship in Toronto with Carpenters Local 27 where he worked for a variety of companies and contractors. He was always active as a job steward as well as an on-site Joint Health and Safety Committee member. It was his responsibility to make sure that every job site was safe. When the time was right, he became an Organizer, a position he held for seven years. As an Organizer, his job was to recruit and to promote the Carpenters' Union to companies not already signatory to the Union. He then became a Business Representative, where he looked after memberships, on-site issues, jurisdictional issues, and dealt with lawyers and contractors. He has been in his current role as a Veteran Liaison Representative for the past two and a half years. As Mike describes it: "the role was created to assist Veterans, who are transitioning from the military, or who are still actively serving in reserve units. We've now extended this to our Afghan interpreters or anyone who had an enduring relationship with Canada during the Afghan conflict and who have now come to Canada. We are going to help them as best we can."



## Helmets to Hardhats

Mike heard about Helmets to Hardhats (H2H) and how it was running in the U.S. roughly 15 years ago. A few years later, Joe Maloney announced H2H would be starting up in Canada. The Carpenters' Union jumped at the chance to work with H2H and Mike has been a supporter ever since and helps to promote the use of Veteran hires to other Locals. Mike is a trailblazer in his work as a Veteran Liaison Representative in that his position is unique in the trades. His role is the first of its kind within a union organization in Canada. He feels H2H can play a significant role in aiding with the growing demand for labour in the construction industry. He states: "It's going to be a huge task but I believe this is the number one avenue for meeting the demand."

While there are currently over 60 Veterans, who have come through the H2H program working in the province of Ontario, there are a few who stand out to Mike: Max Stalbaum, whose story can be found in this very issue of the Canadian Construction Journal, and Curtis McNeil. Curtis made a successful transition from military to civilian life and is now working for the scaffold and work platform company, Summit Access Solutions Inc. Summit has hired about eight H2H Veterans and Curtis has been mentoring the new recruits to success. Summit has been a great supporter of the H2H program and is always happy to work with Veteran hires.

**"[H2H] now extended [its mandate] to our Afghan interpreters or anyone who had an enduring relationship with Canada during the Afghan conflict and who have now come to Canada. We are going to help them as best we can."**

## Veterans in Construction

Veterans are becoming sought after in the construction industry as they have unique and much needed skill sets. To Mike, they bring a sense of timing and punctuality to the job. Time restraints are an ever-present reality in the trades, and this is an area in which Veterans are particularly proficient. Everybody wins on a job site where tasks are completed on time so that other trades can also finish their jobs on time. As Mike explains “whether you were deployed or not, you were always put in stressful situations and worked as a team. It’s the same on a construction site; everyone has to work together as a team to complete a build. It’s not one person who can complete the task.”

Another initiative, which is close to both Mike and the Carpenters’ Union is Camp Maple Leaf. Camp Maple Leaf is a special camp set up to help the children of military families, who are dealing with the inherent challenges that come with military life, such as constant relocation, family members on lengthy deployments, and dealing with grief and loss. Counselors are there to help children navigate through these challenges. Mike got involved with the camp through Team Rubicon. Team Rubicon is a group of Veterans and first responders who do volunteering in communities with a focus on disaster relief. They work right across Canada and into other parts of the world and boast hundreds of volunteers amongst their ranks, including some H2H members. They assist at Camp Maple Leaf by cleaning up the camp and getting it ready for summer. Last year, they installed accessibility ramps around the camp to make the camp wheelchair accessible.



“whether [Vets] were deployed or not, we were always put in stressful situations and worked as a team. It’s the same on a construction site; everyone has to work together as a team to complete a build. It’s not one person who can complete the task.”





## Mentorship Program

Currently, Mike is involved with launching a mentorship program through the United Brotherhood of Carpenters. The program aims to pair mentors with mentees in the trades for a year-long commitment. Mentors are provided with training in order to prepare them for the role of mentor. Mentees are not required to be trained prior to signing up for the program. Candidates are paired up based on their application forms and how well they fit with each other.

Mike Humphries is proud of the work he has done in forging strong ties between H2H and the Carpenters' Regional Council. Whether it is through placing more Veterans into unionized jobs, or through hosting future H2H galas at their event space in Vaughan, ON, the Council will be there to support Veterans entering the construction industry.

For more information on the Carpenters' Regional Council visit: <https://thecarpentersunion.ca/>

**Team Rubicon is a group of Veterans and first responders who do volunteering in communities with a focus on disaster relief. They work right across Canada and into other parts of the world and boast hundreds of volunteers amongst their ranks, including some H2H members.**



# Joe Maloney

National Executive Director of H2H

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**Joe talks to us about the services Helmets to Hardhats now offers, and where the organization plans to go in the coming years. As always, Helmets to Hardhats connects Veterans with construction jobs, and employers with dedicated, hardworking employees.**

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By: Paul Harrison



**“The problem** we have in Canada is that a lot of people don’t think about our Veterans the way they should. Most people think about Veterans on Remembrance Day. They think: ‘a Veteran? Oh my God! That’s an old individual. That’s World War II, Korean War, that kind of thing. They don’t understand that a Veteran is somebody who has served in uniform, and they could have served for 5 years,

10 years,

15 years,

**but they’re still a Veteran.**

The average age that we place a veteran into the construction industry is 32-34 years old. So, they’re not old people. These people have served their country, and now they’ve decided to have a new chapter in life and they’re going in a different direction; they have a whole working career ahead of them. So, we talk to them about the construction industry

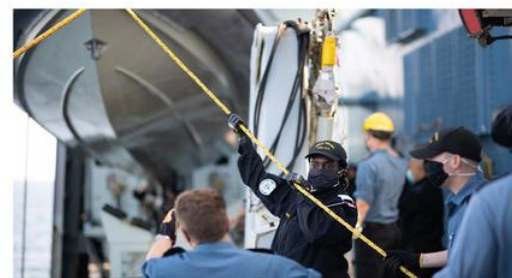
...and we get them into an

**JOE MALONEY**



opportunity.”





## Helmets to Hardhats Canada, Part 3: Building the Future

Joe Maloney outlines H2H's plans for the foreseeable future.

In their quest to reach every Veteran, Helmets to Hardhats (H2H) has developed a dedication to finding Veterans who have fallen between the cracks after leaving the service. "Unfortunately, we have a very high percentage of homeless Veterans in this country," Maloney laments as he elucidates: "They served their country, and for whatever reason, - for whatever issues came into their lives - when they were released, they ended up homeless or near-homeless."

H2H is committed to seeking out homeless Veterans and getting them into housing and meaningful job opportunities. To do this, H2H has a partnership with Good Shepherd Ministries in Toronto. Good Shepherd provides meals, shelters, showers, medical and psychological assistance, and education to the homeless population in Toronto. While they serve both civilians and Veterans alike, they keep a watchful eye out for Veterans on behalf of H2H.

Joe lays out how the process works: "Good Shepherd identifies the Veteran. And then, they will get them to a point where their addiction or issues are under control. They get them into residence. Then," Joe pauses, before announcing with a tinge of pride: "at that point, we get them into an opportunity." Prior to the covid lockdowns, this program was "going along pretty well." But then "the pandemic hit and that slowed everything down because Good Shepherd Ministries has in-room dining, where people come for their lunch everyday. And they had to shut all that down." Thankfully, things are picking up again and H2H is "hoping to get more homeless Veterans into construction industry opportunities as we move through 2022." Many of these initiatives from H2H have been made possible through a grant from the Ontario Government's Skills Development Fund.

"Unfortunately, we have a very high percentage of homeless Veterans in this country"



# **G O V E R N M E N T B A C K I N G**

H2H has applied for project specific grants from the federal and provincial governments from their inception. Joe tells how H2H's relationship with government has only grown stronger over the past decade: "Working with Veterans Affairs Canada has been absolutely spectacular. They are very supportive of the program. We deal with them on a regular basis. Minister MacAulay is really good to work with because he truly supports Veterans, and he really understands our industry and he understands the assistance it gives to Veterans. And this Ontario Government, under Doug Ford, has given spectacular support to Helmets to Hardhats. They support us on a variety of grant applications we put forward, specific to Veterans and the construction industry."

The governments of Canada and Ontario pledged their continued bipartisan dedication to the program on 5 May 2022 at the 10th anniversary gala for H2H in Vaughan, Ontario. Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Veterans Affairs for Canada, and Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour for Ontario, were both in attendance, voicing their strong support for the work H2H has done, and continues to do.

With over 700 people from the public and private sectors in attendance – including many captains of the construction industry in Canada – the gala was a great success. Alex Lolua, the general manager of EPSCA (Electrical Power Systems Construction Association), and Susan Bird, President of McAteer Group of Companies, kept the patrons entertained and informed as they emceed the evening.





## **Government Backing, *Continued***

Other highlights included speeches from: Jamie McMillan, who is also employed with H2H, spoke about her life as a trailblazing woman in the once male-dominated iron work industry; several Veterans from the H2H program, who spoke about how H2H helped train them and find them work in the trades; and Terry Kelly, who inspired the crowd with his stories and songs.

Most importantly, the gala celebrated the successes of H2H over the past ten years – including the referrals of over 2,500 veterans into the trades in that time – while looking forward to the next ten years. Expansion into the nuclear industry, providing training in safety disciplines prior to placements, and closer work with women, LGBTQ2+ and Indigenous Veterans are all developing initiatives for H2H in the coming months.

**"Veterans are very resilient people, and they are very smart and creative. And they get out there and just get it done."**





## Plans for the Future

Maloney's plans for the future remain focused on the bedrock of the skills and values Veterans bring with them to the workplace: "Veterans are very resilient people, and they are very smart and creative. And they get out there and just get it done. They don't whine and complain about things in life. And the training they get in the military is just amazing." In the next decade, Maloney is certain that a proliferation of Veteran-owned construction companies will come as a result of H2H's program: "Once this thing comes around full circle, you are going to see down the road, Veterans who open up their own construction companies. We are looking forward to that."

But despite any new plans that come down the pipe, the core vision of H2H has remained constant since Joe first dreamed up the idea in Washington, D.C. two decades ago. The retired boilermaker proclaims: "Being a construction worker is a great way to make a living. I mean, you make great wages. Yeah, it's physical work! So what?! [Veterans] are used to physical work. And they make great wages for their families, they have benefits, and they have pension plans. And that's what we all need in life. And we, in the industry, are getting some special, valuable people."

Beyond this, Maloney ultimately sees H2H as a moral obligation: "For what [Veterans] have done and continue to do for us, offering them opportunities when they come home is just the right thing to do. We've got to say thank you. We've got to pay more respect to our Veterans. I like to tell people: if you're not going to stand behind your veterans, then try standing in front of them."





“THANK YOU SO MUCH. I HAD NO IDEA THIS WAS AVAILABLE TO ME. AND NOW I’M STARTING A CAREER AS A CARPENTER, OR AS A BOILERMAKER, OR AS AN ELECTRICIAN OR AS A PIPEFITTER. AND IT’S HELPED ME AND MY FAMILY.”

# FROM THE TROOPS: MILITARY TO CARPENTER

BRENT DEWELL, 32 CER  
COMBAT ENGINEER REGIMENT



HELMETSTO HARDHATS.CA



## Plans for the Future

Considering that the majority of H2H’s employees are Veterans, with three decades of service under each of their individual belts, it is no wonder why they too are so devoted to assist their comrades-in-arms. They know the hardships that can come with transitioning to civilian life. It is one of the highlights of the job to know they help fellow Veterans every day. And Veterans have been incredibly grateful in return. Maloney hears from those who have been through the program frequently. Many tell him: “thank you so much. I had no idea this was available to me. And now I’m starting a career as a carpenter, or as a boilermaker, or as an electrician or as a pipefitter. And it’s helped me and my family.” For Joe, “that’s what it’s all about. That makes the whole program a success.”

For more information, visit their website at:  
<https://www.helmetstohardhats.ca/en/home.htm>

The 3 parts of H2H's story will be published all in one special issue, along with all other H2H content we have released.



# Industry, Integrity Progress: Helmets to Hardhats and the CLRA



CONSTRUCTION  
LABOUR  
RELATIONS  
ALBERTA



By: Greg Akeson



## **An Interview with Joe Fadyen from CLRA**

### **CLRA History**

For over 50 years, the Construction Labour Relations - An Alberta Association (CLRA) has led construction employers through labour negotiations. Representing over 200 contractors and the largest employer organization of its kind, CLRA works on behalf of contractors to administer all their collective bargaining and to bring forth legislative changes. It also provides training and support programs and helps to craft solutions that keep pace with ever-changing trends in the construction industry. Simply put, CLRA is the umbrella organization that acts as the collective voice of the contractors, while the various independent unions act as the voices of their respective employees. Most recently, the CLRA was involved with changes to the Alberta Industry Training Act, now called the Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Training Act.



As the current president of CLRA, Joe McFadyen's role is to oversee the organization on a corporate level. He is a secretary of the Board and also participates as secretary of the Coordinating Committee, a group consisting of the heads of numerous registered employers' organizations (Boilermakers, Electrical Contractors, etc.), in order to discuss industry issues. As secretary of both the Committee and the Board, Joe's role is to carry out decisions and consult with contractors and to make recommendations on different paths forward. In addition, he oversees the entirety of the CLRA.

**The CLRA is the umbrella organization that acts as the collective voice of the contractors, while the various independent unions act as the voices of their respective employees**



## Joe McFadyen's Work

Joe brings many years of experience to his current role as president of CLRA. He started in the airline industry, working as a station attendant providing ground support. While in this job, he became a shop steward in the union, representing ground support personnel and aircraft mechanics. Over the course of 20 years, he worked his way up to president of his local and represented them on national committees. He then went to work for the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, where he represented the instructors as labour relations officer, a role he held for nine years. In 2003, Joe transitioned to CLRA, where he began as a labour relations officer and finally transitioned into the role of president in 2019. Though Joe has spent his career working in different industries, he has always been involved in labour relations. He brings not only experience but education, both which he acquired over the course of his storied career.







## Joe Discover H2H

When Joe transitioned into the role of president of CLRA, he became a member of the board of H2H, a role that came very natural to him having grown up in a family where his father was a career serviceman. Joe knew first-hand what Veterans have to offer the construction industry. While some Veterans leave the service having acquired skills applicable to the construction industry, they more often embody the sought-after qualities necessary in an always labour-hungry market. Veterans are mature, they have a sense of strong discipline, they know what hard work is and how to be engaged in work. As Joe says, “they know how to work, and that’s the important piece. They know how to get the job done, whatever that job is. I mean they seem to be very well skilled and very well suited to our industry.”

As in other parts of the country, the construction industry in Alberta is also experiencing an impending skilled labour shortage. H2H is a great resource to help mitigate this shortage. Even for those veterans who do not bring a particular skilled trade with them, the opportunity to become educated in a trade exists for those transitioning from military to civilian life. Both trade schools and union schools provide the necessary training to succeed in making the transition. Joe says about the trades, “I always say about the tradespeople, they are extremely creative. They always seem to have this creative mind, and they figure these things out, and they can put things together, and yes, a lot of it is a learned skill, but it’s a different kind of mindset and I think that has been, to some degree, misunderstood – (just) how creative and how talented and skilled these people are.”

**“[Veterans] know how to work, and that’s the important piece. They know how to get the job done, whatever that job is...they seem to be very well skilled and very well suited to our industry.”**



## The Future of Construction Labour in Alberta

The challenge facing Alberta's construction labour market at the present time is that of building a homegrown workforce. In the past, Alberta's labour came mainly from different parts of the country as people from as far away as Newfoundland would move temporarily to Alberta for work, and then, when work ended, they would move back to Newfoundland. In cases like that, both money and labour leave the province, thereby having a negative effect on the local economy. As Joe says, "there was a lot of fly-in-fly-out in Alberta, so individuals, who would work in our province, lived in different provinces across the country. That's fine, but what you're really doing is you're stealing labour from a different part of the country, you're not really building that labour up. I think the challenge for Alberta is to build an Alberta workforce."

As Joe reflects on his career over several decades, he remembers the many periods of "boom and bust" within the various industries in which he worked. It is during the periods of "bust," when things are at their bleakest, that a leader shows his true mettle. For Joe, the most important thing is to find resolve and be part of the foundation that brings about stability as it serves to assist people through difficult times. "I want to do what's best for my contractors, but I also want to do what's best for the industry... if we can do what's best for industry, everybody benefits."

For more information on the CLRA, visit their website at <https://clra.org/>



By: Greg Akeson



## TLA: Military Precision Meets Housing Development in Edmonton and Salt Spring Island, B.C.

### The History

Tired of the “buyer/seller dance” so often encountered in the corporate world? So too are Chris Bradley and Troy Grant, Managing Partners of TLA Developments, and this is the reason their “no bullshit” approach to doing business resonates so well in the construction industry. As Veterans both with over 20 years of service in the Canadian military, Chris and Troy take pride in TLA, which started only two and a half years ago and already has a portfolio of 10+ projects under their belts: an impressive accomplishment for a company with 13 employees, four of whom are military Veterans. As Chris explains: “When you come out of the army, everyone expects you to be something like Gunnery Sergeant Hartman from Full Metal Jacket, always yelling and screaming at people, but the truth is, the army is a very collaborative place, built on mutual trust and respect...you are honest, forthright, and frank with each other because you need to be.”

After retiring from the army as a Major, Chris began his civilian working life as a defense contractor for Allied Container Systems. As Chris jokes, “Though Allied Container systems sounds like the name of a trucking company,” it really offered support to “the Canadian Army, American Army, British Army and US Marine Corps.” This project was unique: “we built fake villages, and then we populated fake villages, and we brought movie-level practical and special effects to Army collective training.” This is to say that they constructed villages to train military personnel in simulated real-world environments; live explosions were commonplace on the jobsite, which had the feel of an action movie! But more importantly, working at Allied allowed for Chris to maintain work in the military field but from a civilian role. It also gave him the opportunity to learn about modular building, which was commonly used in the construction of these “fake villages.”



## Chris Bradley & Troy Grant

With a growing interest in modular building, Chris went from Allied to join “probably the largest volumetric modular building companies in western North America: Guerdon Modular Buildings in Boise, Idaho.” Though he was more on the sales side, he learned what is involved in building hotels and apartments at Guerdon. Chris’s journey continued to Horizon North (now NRB Modular) as Director of Sales, then on to Octaform in Vancouver, and finally to TLA Developments.

Like Chris, Troy joined the Army as a young man in the 1980s, rose to the rank of Captain, and retired in 2010. He set up a leadership and organizational design company, which was a successful endeavour with many clients from British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, and even down to California. He was then invited by Sturgeon County, near Edmonton, Alberta to be their General Manager of Public Services. His portfolio included land use development, land use bylaws, land use planning, as well as economic development. Though he enjoyed his time there and it was extremely important to his development, both personally and professionally, he felt he did not fit as a bureaucrat.



It was by luck that Troy was invited by a large land development company in the capital region of Alberta to be their president, and discovered he loved it even more in the private sector. He set up a land development company and undertook a project north of Edmonton. This incentivized him to better understand the financial, marketing and sales side of things. He moved into working as an owner’s rep for some larger projects in B.C. and some in Alberta. Then, two and a half years ago, he began TLA, purchased some land, and invited Chris to partner with him, and the rest is history.

# Military Skills Transferable to the Construction Industry

In keeping with their “no bullshit” philosophy, TLA’s hiring policy is quite simple: hire for fit, train for trade. As Troy says Veteran hires are top of the list, followed by family, friends of employees, and finally pe: “no matter which TLA team member you speak to, you will always get the unfettered truth” Just like the army of today, TLA’s workforce is extremely diverse. Staff come from a variety of cultural backgrounds; more than half of the directors are female, and several of the team members are Indigenous. Worthy of note are two very special employees, Dexter and Mando (their dogs), whose presence helps to keep the staff at TLA grounded and free from stress. It makes sense, considering TLA is a supporter of SCARS (Second Chance Animal Rescue Society), a not-for-profit organization.

As a Veteran-owned-and-operated company, both Troy and Chris agree that there are major advantages to hiring military Veterans. Troy says: “coming out of the Army, there’s a damn fine chance that you’re a hard worker and a good team player. What company doesn’t want that and doesn’t need that?” The skills learned in the military are directly applicable to TLA and what they do. Veterans show up and give everything they have to be successful; they look for leadership opportunities, they look for opportunities to make the people around them better, they look for opportunities to challenge themselves, they look for opportunities to work smarter and not harder. As Chris so aptly puts it: “the construction world lives by discipline, lives by scheduling, and you need to be able to rely on your people. Well, that’s the Army, right? Instead of grabbing your rifle, you’re grabbing your tools and applying the skills sets and training you have just to a different environment.”



And although Troy and Chris never worked with Helmets to Hardhats during their transitions out of the military, they like what the organization offers. Chris states: “I think it’s fantastic that you have groups and initiatives like Helmets to Hardhats, helping Army guys to make that transition because, unfortunately, some of the Army guys do get institutionalized into the organization. Then, they don’t realize how transferable their skills are into the civilian market, and construction in particular. So, it’s great to have an organization (like Helmets to Hardhats) to make that move.”



# THE FUTURE OF TLA DEVELOPMENTS

“TLA builds primarily in the B.C. and Alberta capital regions. They use traditional build-styles and introduce sustainability factors where they can, based on regional requirements. In British Columbia, the company has handled projects as big as a 50 unit, six-storey family condo and as small as a 12-unit custom subdivision on Salt Spring Island, B.C. In Alberta, they typically handle rental projects. The biggest project they have in Alberta will be the construction of 360 rental units in St. Albert, Alberta in partnership with the St. Albert Housing Society, a not-for-profit that helps families find safe and affordable housing.

For achieving such resounding success in only two and a half years, Troy and Chris remain humble and do not boast any awards or accolades but prefer to fly under the radar and be honest and “less polished.” What lies ahead for TLA? They will continue to provide a soft-landing place for Veterans and family members. As Troy puts it: “it’s very important that guys like us, in our position, help those coming out of the Army to make the transition to companies like ours. In fact, I feel we are obligated to do so.” They will continue to take on three to five new projects per year and build great homes for Canadians, as well as continue to provide a great place to work.

For more information, visit TLA's website at <https://www.tladev.ca/>





COMMISSIONAIRES







## Commissionaires – Valuing the Skills and Experience of Veterans and Their Families

By Capt (N) Paul Guindon (Ret'd)  
Chief Executive Officer, Commissionaires Ottawa

*This is Part 1 of a three-part series about the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires (“Commissionaires”). This first part explores the history of Commissionaires as well as its social mandate, numerous community causes, and some current projects it is working on in the construction industry. Parts 2 and 3 will appear in future editions of Canadian Construction Journal.*



When you think of a commissionaire, what kind of person comes to mind? How old are they? Where do they live and work? Are they a family member, friend or neighbour?

When you think of a soldier, sailor or aviator who is transitioning out of the Canadian Armed Forces, or an officer transitioning out of the RCMP or police services, what kind of person comes to mind? How old are they? Where do they live and work? Are they a family member, friend or neighbour?

Whether the decision to transition to civilian life and pursue a second career happens in their 20s, 30s, 40s or later in life, thousands of veterans are also commissionaires.



## **Commissionaires – Led by Canadian Veterans, for Canadian Veterans**

Commissionaires is Canada’s largest private sector employer of Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and RCMP veterans. It was established in 1925 to help veterans transition to civilian life—a social purpose that has expanded across Canada and today, benefits 22,000 employees of all ages and backgrounds.

Modern-day commissionaires are “everywhere”: commercial, high-tech, industrial or government buildings; international and local airports; colleges and universities; hospitals and seniors residences; financial institutions; tourist and shopping destinations; police, RCMP and military buildings; and embassies around the world.

The fact our organization is led by veterans is a critical element in understanding the unique experiences of veterans and their employment needs as they transition to civilian life. We are veterans serving veterans. Board directors and senior management are overwhelmingly veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces, RCMP and police services.

We also hire civilians. The civilians who join our organization often have a connection with the Canadian Armed Forces, RCMP and police in some way:

- They are immediate members of military families, such as spouses and adult children.
- They are descendants of commissionaires, or were referred by commissionaires.
- They share a passion to protect WHO and WHAT Canadians value most.
- They don’t want any job. They want to work somewhere that has a purpose.

**“Commissionaires’ not-for-profit structure enables more than 90% of spending to flow back to employees in the form of wages, training, benefits, and employee-centric programs.”**

## Our Purpose: Giving Back

When you hire a commissioner, you are doing business with a private sector, self-funded organization that is Canada's only national, not-for-profit security organization.

Our not-for-profit structure enables more than 90% of spending to flow back to our employees in the form of wages, training, benefits, and employee-centric programs. The very reason we exist is to protect the communities we serve and in the process, take care of our employees and their families.

Awareness and recognition about who we are and what we do is ongoing, and we are grateful. In 2022, Commissionaires was honoured with a Veteran Employment Champion Award at a Celebration of Service event on Parliament Hill hosted by Members of Parliament across party lines.

Beyond providing meaningful second and third careers, Commissionaires' social purpose extends to giving back to veterans and their families in our communities—such as through national surveys, advocacy and awareness campaigns, veteran task forces, and volunteerism.

Giving back to veterans and their families also includes donations and sponsorships, and Commissionaires has been active on those fronts. Recent beneficiaries of donations include:

- **Perley Health: \$3 million to improve the quality of life for our aging loved ones—** Perley Health is a unique and innovative campus of care for more than 600 seniors and veterans living in independent apartments or receiving long-term care. Perley Health is also a centre for research, education, and clinical and therapeutic services for Canada's seniors and veterans. In the form of major gifts, Commissionaires (Ottawa Division) donated \$2 million toward the Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care, the first of its kind in Canada, and \$1 million toward the creation of an assisted-living residence that over 150 seniors and veterans call home today.
- **Veterans' House: \$1 million to take veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness off the streets—** Veterans' House, a Multifaith Housing Initiative (MHI), received a lead campaign gift of \$1 million toward their Heroes' Welcome campaign to build a three-story, 40-unit supportive housing facility at the former CFB Rockcliffe Air Base. Veterans' House combines safe housing with essential onsite rehabilitation services. Four more homes are planned across Canada.
- **Military Family Resource Centres/Military Family Services: \$500,000 to support military families who have sacrificed so much—** Commissionaires has donated over \$500,000 towards family and children's respite programs, providing financial aid and services to families coping with the absence of a deployed loved one. Some of this funding has been redirected by Military Family Services to Support Our Troops.
- **The Pepper Pod Retreat Centre for Women Veterans: \$90,000 to connect women veterans and their experiences—**The Pepper Pod offers women veterans a safe place, tools, resources, and a network of new friendships. This haven was created to prepare and support women veterans as they transition out of the Canadian Armed Forces or the RCMP and begin to adjust to a civilian way of life. The program gathers women veterans across Canada.





## **Our Purpose: Giving Back, Continued**

Specific to sponsorships, there are many examples. One that we're excited about is our title sponsorship of a 2023 PGA TOUR Canada event—named the Commissionaires Ottawa Open—an official Fortinet Cup tournament conducted by ClubEG.Golf.

The Commissionaires Ottawa Open will run from 17-23 July 2023 at the Eagle Creek Golf Club in Dunrobin, Ontario. Proceeds from the Commissionaires Ottawa Open will benefit Soldier On, a Canadian Armed Forces program that contributes to the recovery of ill and injured CAF members and veterans. Soldier On delivers opportunities and resources through sport, recreational and creative activities—a great match for this tournament.

## **Our Ties to the Construction Industry**

Commissionaires work hand in hand with many construction companies across the country. For example, more than 100 commissionaires are providing a range of security services for the Centre Block Rehabilitation project in Canada's National Capital Region. This project alone includes oversight of a thousand contractors and several heritage buildings sprawled across acres of land. As one of our highest profile projects, our contract was recently renewed and the estimated completion date is 2030.

Another example of our work is in Petawawa on the Mattawa Plains Compound, with more than 30 security guards and dozens of construction workers. Launched in 2018, this project is estimated to require 10 years to complete.

In addition, we are helping secure the construction site of the Gordie Howe International Bridge project that links the Windsor-Detroit region. There are about 25 commissionaires supporting this major construction project.

Working closely with construction companies, commissionaires ensure the safety of thousands of construction and trade workers across Canada, so they can do their job safely and securely. From contractor escort services to mobile alarm response, we offer vigilance and responsiveness so you can focus on the job at hand.

**“Commissionaires work hand in hand  
with many construction companies across  
the country.”**

## More Than Security

Beyond traditional security guarding, the spectrum of innovative employment opportunities offered to our commissionaires has diversified substantially during the past couple of decades in particular. Our service offerings also include:

- threat risk assessments
- computerized monitoring and surveillance
- outsourced police services and by-law enforcement
- comprehensive security training programs
- security systems installations
- IoT network convergence
- software and simulation solutions for the defence and public security sectors
- cybersecurity
- and operation of the largest fingerprinting and criminal background checks infrastructure in the country

We'll tell you more about those services in Part 2 of this series, in the next edition of Canadian Construction Journal.

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***To learn more about Commissionaires, please visit:  
[commissionaires.ca](http://commissionaires.ca)***





# CONTRIBUTIONS DIRECTORY

## National Scholarship Program



Special thanks to the Staff and Management at the OTTAWA MARRIOTT for donating space during the initial stages of this launch.

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# **SUPPORT OUR TROOPS**

National Scholarship Program



A life in the military brings with it certain unique challenges and circumstances that can arise due to the very nature of the job. It can bring absence of military members away from their families, it can bring relocation across Canada and the world, and it can bring transitions such as illness, injury or transitioning from military to civilian life. All of these challenges can affect a service member's entire family.

Support Our Troops, the official charitable cause of the Canadian Armed Forces, was established in 2007 to help meet these unique needs and special challenges of military service people and their families. Support Our Troops offers a variety of grants and programs to assist military members and their families. One program in particular, The National Scholarship Program, was born from a growing need to reduce significant barriers for military families in order to pursue their academic dreams.

The National Scholarship Program was launched in 2015 in response to the unique circumstances faced by military families. A significant barrier for many Canadian Armed Forces families is the securing of funds for pursuing post-secondary education. The National Scholarship Program works to remove some of those barriers by providing scholarships to military dependents.

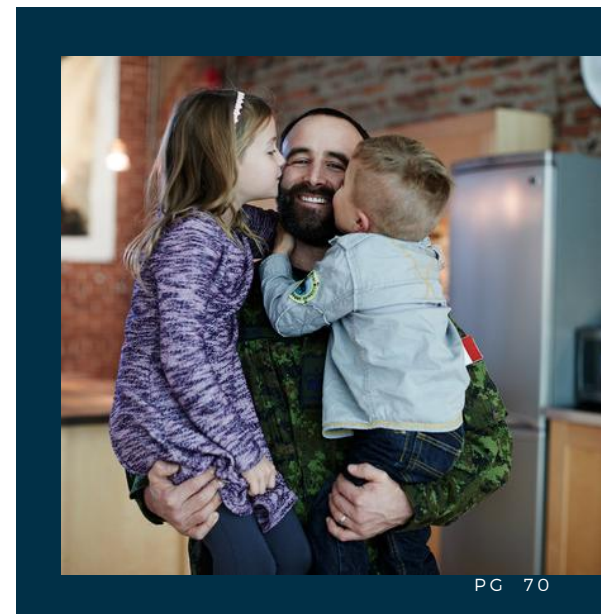
The National Scholarship Program has grown immensely since the launch of the program, thanks to generous donors. Due to the efforts of those involved, the Scholarship Program raised an impressive \$200,000 last year alone, signaling the success of the program.

To donate, visit:

<http://weblink.donorperfect.com/HindenBoyd.ca>

The application process for the National Scholarship Program is straightforward and involves an essay component. The purpose of this is for applicants to tell their stories; for instance, the effect military life has had, both positive and negative challenges faced, and what future aspirations lie ahead. While Support Our Troops funds the program, it is Military Family Services who are the facilitators and who ultimately assess each application.

As part of our spotlight on Helmets to Hardhats and Canadian Veterans, The Canadian Construction Journal is proud to donate a percentage of our profits to the Support Our Troops National Scholarship Program.





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## **Black & McDonald: A Multi-trade Service Provider Backed by a Century of Experience**

Black & McDonald's mission is to do work and build relationships that stand the test of time.

Our company was founded in 1921 as an electrical contractor by two First World War veterans. Throughout the century since B&M was established, we have evolved into an integrated, multi-trade service provider that safely delivers high-quality construction, facilities management, and technical solutions to government, institutional and industrial clients.

Today, our multiple business lines have grown to employ more than 5,000 people working out of 30+ offices across North America. Throughout our more than 100 years in business, we remained driven by our founders' philosophy to "Do things right," and "Deliver lasting value." That simple promise remains at the core of everything we do.

“we remained driven by our  
founders' philosophy to “Do  
things right,” and “Deliver  
lasting value.”





## Facilities Management

Black & McDonald is a flexible contractor that works in consultation with our clients to understand their needs and meet their facility goals. We offer our clients a complete range of hard and soft services that optimize essential operations and enable you to focus on your primary business functions. We deliver planned and predictive programs that generate positive and measurable business outcomes. Our integrated facilities management includes hard and soft services, such as:

- Planned and Predictive Maintenance
- Demand and Emergency Maintenance
- Asset Management
- Building Systems and Condition Assessments
- Grounds Maintenance and Snow Removal
- Project management and delivery

Our facility services experts are available to help you identify opportunities to enhance the operation of your facilities and to develop a tailored solution to meet the specific requirements of your facility or property portfolio.

As an integrated, multi-trade facility service provider, we understand facility owners have specific needs to achieve their day-to-day operational requirements, and B&M collaborates with them to provide streamlined technical solutions.

As well, our solutions are data driven. We leverage the information coming from your buildings and assets, so we can help you manage risk and optimize your operations, energy use, and productivity.

To provide support when it is required, B&M operates a 24/7/365 central contact centre and a fit-for-purpose computerized maintenance management system that offer powerful reporting tools and dashboards, giving our customers total visibility into their asset performance.

B&M is hired by our clients as a partner to ensure the facilities under our care are operated safely and efficiently for all building users, and that service excellence and best value is delivered through the life of our agreement.

**“To provide support when it is required, B&M operates a 24/7/365 Central Contact Centre”**



## Sustainability

An important segment of the technical solutions we provide is a focus on sustainability and energy conservation. With the pressing threat of climate change, facilities are taking a more urgent course of action as they sharpen their focus to include decarbonization strategies.

The Energy Services & Sustainability (ESS) team at B&M helps facilities develop a path to net zero emissions that operates in accordance with their facility's requirements.

Integrating energy management into our facility services solutions enhances our capabilities for more in-depth asset management information for major systems, assets, and loads. This is achieved by combining analytics from energy management tools with work order information, maintenance costs, and maintenance frequencies.

Our ESS team ensures a measured approach to maximizing opportunities found in operational efficiency, leveraging industry partnerships for best-in-class low-carbon technologies, and utilizing all available funding and incentives.

In addition to reducing environmental impact, B&M's energy services equip facility managers with innovative tools and strategies to mitigate rising energy costs. B&M's dashboard-driven system utilizes data, trend analysis and predictive modelling to find and reduce energy waste. This insight allows B&M to deliver professional services such as energy audits and recommissioning, real-time energy intelligence using data dashboards, greenhouse gas (GHG) reporting, energy modelling and planning, and P3 energy performance management.

**“B&M helps facilities develop a path to net zero emissions...”**



## Construction

Black & McDonald safely delivers turnkey electrical, mechanical, and utility construction solutions to clients in the commercial, industrial, institutional, government, and utility sectors.

Our multi-trade teams bring together trades, technicians, and professionals to create a true single-source service provider. We provide expertise in:

- Turnkey Construction
- Engineering Procurement Construction (EPC)
- Design Build
- Public Private Partnerships (P3)

From tender to construction, Black & McDonald's cross-functional teams cooperate with clients and consultants to develop solutions aimed at meeting scheduling and budgetary parameters established by the contract.

Black & McDonald is also capable of delivering fabrication and modular construction.

Our sheet metal and custom fabrication groups provide sole source and specialty metal solutions for every form of heating, ventilation, air conditioning, exhaust, and environmental challenge. Our team works directly with design consultants to co-develop integrated models for both electrical and mechanical systems.

Our fabrication capabilities reside in our Halifax, Ottawa, Toronto, and Saskatoon facilities.

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[www.reachcpa.ca](http://www.reachcpa.ca)



# Modular Building in Canada

The Modular Building Institute (MBI) is the international trade association for modular construction. Founded in 1983, MBI is proudly celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. It is located in Charlottesville, Virginia. Members include manufacturers, contractors, and dealers. There are two distinct segments of the modular industry the MBI represents: permanent modular construction and relocated buildings.


MBI is not only the voice of the modular construction industry, but also a hub for education, innovation, and outreach. In addition, MBI presents its members with Awards of Distinction, which are held annually at the MBI's World of Modular conference and tradeshow. MBI also releases their own magazine (Modular Advantage Magazine) and podcast (Inside Modular).

As we set out on a new initiative to cover modular building in Canada, we at The Canadian Construction Journal thought it best to let the experts speak for themselves. That's why we are, with the kind permission of the MBI, re-publishing John McMullen's article, "The Rapid Rise of Affordable Modular Housing in Canada" (Modular Advantage Magazine, Sept-Oct 2022: 18-26).

Alongside this piece, we will be featuring an interview with ANC, based in Brantford, Ontario, as well as an interview with Logan Ashley, from Adaptive Homes, in Revelstoke, British Columbia. Both ANC and Adaptive Homes are on the cutting edge of modular building in Canada. Over the next few months, we will be adding more Canadian modular builders to our roster.







**The Rapid  
Rise Of  
Affordable  
Modular  
Housing  
In  
Canada**

By John McMullen,  
Marketing Director, Modular Building Institute



## The Rapid Rise of Modular Building in Canada

In October 2020, the Government of Canada, through its Canadian Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC), launched the Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) to address the urgent housing needs of vulnerable Canadians. The initial round of the RHI's funding—all of which went toward modular buildings—was CN \$1 billion, and in the immediate wake of COVID-19, it went quickly. And it was put to immediate use.

"The federal funding available through RHI set out to cover the construction of new rental housing units that would be available for occupancy within 12 months," says Mark Becker, Chief Operating Officer at Dexterra Group and interim President, NRB Modular Solutions. "This is a very tight timeline to deliver on and it made modular construction an attractive choice to provide the fastest path to occupancy."

In fact, the RHI exceeded its initial target of creating 3,000 new affordable housing units, and, in total, supported the construction of more than 4,700 units across Canada.

In 2021, the RHI was provided a second round of funding: an additional \$1.5 billion toward the construction of new multifamily modular housing. And like the first round, these additional funds helped the RHI exceed its initial target of creating 4,500 new affordable units and is expected to create a total of over 5,400 new housing units across Canada.

These huge successes were followed by a pair of even bigger announcements in 2021. Two of the continent's largest banks, Scotiabank and Bank of Montreal, each agreed to work with the CMHC and commit a combined \$22 billion to create new affordable housing across Canada over the next 10 years.





## **The Rapid Rise of Modular Building in Canada, *Continued***

As it has from the beginning, MBI is working closely with the CMHC to funnel as much of these committed funds as possible to the modular-focused RHI, which itself is currently working on the application guidelines for its expected third round of funding.

“We’ve seen firsthand how these projects have made a difference,” says Curtis Ince, Director, Brand and Marketing at Nomodic, a Canadian provider of prefabricated construction solutions who has built several modular projects funded under the RHI. “By giving people a key to the first front door they’ve had in years, it gives them a sense of ownership and a sense of pride.”

“Modular building is integral to making an impact on the need for affordable and attainable housing across our country,” says Andrew Neill, president and CEO of ANC, an Ontario-based general contractor, construction management company, volumetric steel modular manufacturer, and winner of the 2021 Canadian Homebuilders Association National Housing Award for Modular Innovation. “Being able to start the manufacturing process before building permits are issued allows us to get ahead of schedules and provide ‘rapid housing’ which is not possible with conventional construction methods.”

**“Modular building is integral to making an impact on the need for affordable and attainable housing across our country.”**

**-Andrew Neill, President of ANC**





Canadian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Chrystia Freeland, speaks to the importance of addressing the affordable housing crisis in Canada during a visit to the site of Nomodic’s modular supportive housing complex for Atira Women’s Resource Society in Surrey, BC.  
Credit: Nomodic and Martin Knowles Photo/Media

## The Rapid Rise of Modular Building in Canada, *Continued*

“We fully expect modular adoption to continue to grow and likely accelerate as developers, architects, and their clients look for ways to leverage the unique benefits of modular construction,” concludes Dexterra Group’s Mark Becker.

MBI is proud to have helped make such an impact, not only on behalf of its members, but for those who have been directly helped through the creation of these new affordable homes.

For more information on MBI, visit their website at <https://www.modular.org/>





## CASE Homes (Compact Affordable Sustainable Efficient)

Through a design/build contract, ANC provided four (4) CSA-certified modular homes under the Government of Canada's Rapid Housing Initiative.

ANC Modular fabricated three (3) standard and one (1) AODA/FADS-compliant bachelor units concurrently while completing site plan approvals and permit processes.

At issuance of permit, all four (4) homes were erected in three (3) hours, cladded and roofed within five (5) days.

"ANC has a 'base' modular 'box' design that was developed to be exceptionally fluid to many types of housing structures. Using our 'base' modular structure, we were able to design four very unique projects concurrently. A four-plex, a duplex, a townhome complex that had two one floor homes, and three two storey homes in one block, as well as a four-storey apartment building. All these projects used our base modular 'box' and ANC was able to configure them to each development's needs."

Andrew Neill, President and CEO of ANC





## Brant Native Housing – Transitional Homes

Through a design/build contract, ANC provided four (4) CSA-certified mods configured into two (2) 2-bedroom semi-detached homes under the Government of Canada's Rapid Housing Initiative.

Site setback constraints made for minimum neighborhood impact and disruption.

At issuance of permit, all four (4) mods were erected in three (3) hours, then cladded and roofed in five (5) days.





## Six Nations Housing

Through a design/build contract, ANC provided sixteen (16) CSA-certified mods configured in to two (2) 2-bedroom single storey and three (3) 3-bedroom 2-storey townhomes. These buildings were completed under the Government of Canada's Rapid Housing Initiative.

Three (3) months from approved design plans, ANC landed all sixteen (16) modular units in a single day. Townhomes were roofed and cladded within ten (10) days of erection. Tie-ins and ready for occupancy permits were complete within four (4) weeks of landing.





## INDIGENOUS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING COMPLEX

INDIGENOUS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING COMPLEX

**Location:** North Saanich, B.C.

**Completed:** January 2022

**Value:** \$5.4 million

**Size:** 12,000 sq.ft.

**Levels:** 3

**Suites:** 12

**Onsite duration:** 181 days

**Key features:**

- Six 3-bedroom suites, six 1-bedroom suites
- Full kitchens with energy efficient appliances
- High quality, premium finishes
- Large private bathrooms with walk-in showers
- Accessible features including wheelchair ramps

Built with the support of CMHC's Rapid Housing Initiative, this building helps address the urgent need for affordable housing for residents of Pauquachin First Nation in North Saanich, BC. This project was designed and constructed in less than twelve months.

"As the need for affordable and Indigenous housing continues to mount in North America, we are confident that offsite and modern methods of construction can continue to provide benefits in several areas when compared to traditional construction methods.

As programs such as the CMHC's RHI continue to be implemented, Nomodic and its partners remain well-equipped to adapt to the growing demand and deliver projects within government-prescribed timelines."

Kevin Read, President and CEO of Nomodic







## 'LITTLE'S TOO' SUPPORTIVE HOUSING COMPLEX

**Location:** Surrey, B.C.

**Completed:** August 2022

**Budget:** \$9.8 million

**Size:** 24,095 sq. ft.

**Levels:** 4

**Suites:** 44

### Key features:

- 44 self-contained suites, each with kitchenette/washroom
- Commercial kitchen, dining and lounge areas, storage, laundry, and tenant support rooms
- Accessible features including wheelchair ramps
- Meets BC Energy Step Code 4

Built with funding from CMHC's Rapid Housing Initiative and in cooperation with Turnbull Construction Project Managers, this new complex for Atira Women's Society serves women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The facility provides wrap-around services, integrated health supports, and daily meals for residents.





## TYEE SENIORS HOUSING

**BUILDING APPLICATION:** Affordable Seniors Housing

**BUILDING TYPE:** Volumetric Modules

**PROJECT LOCATION:** Kamloops, British Columbia

**BUILDING SIZE:** 2 Bldgs at 2,404 SF/1 Bldg at 2,204 SF

**PROJECT TIMELINE:** 11 Months

### Background

The Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Indian Band (TteS) in Kamloops, British Columbia received 10 suites of affordable housing, built on its lands at Tyee Park.

This project was funded as part of the Canada Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) to create new, affordable housing for elders in the local community.

The manufacturing was completed at NRB's largest manufacturing plant in Kamloops which is also located on Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc land base; with both the land and building under long-term lease.

Our successful collaboration with TteS to develop the design resulted in culturally sensitive housing units providing TteS with certainty of cost, schedule, and quality.

### Challenge

Under the criteria guidelines in place from the RHI program, NRB was awarded the contract to build two 1-storey four-plexes and one 1-storey duplex in May of 2021 with a planned completion of December 2021.

Due to wildfires in the area escalating surrounding priorities for BC Hydro, a pole removal caused the installations to see a delay in building completion until early April 2022.

### Results at a Glance

The supply and Installation of Seniors Housing included the following:

- Two four-plex units and one 2-bedroom duplex.
- Total of 10 suites.
- Building one and three have 2 suites at 599 SF, 2 suites at 603 SF each.
- Building two has 2 suites at 1098 SF.
- Barrier free accessibility provided to 3 suites
- Exterior grading to level entry of accessible suites with concrete slabs at entries for all suites.
- Hardie Panel siding
- Interior drywall (mud, tape and paint)



"We wanted to challenge the perception that modular buildings couldn't seamlessly integrate within a community. To combat the stigma associated with homelessness, one of our key goals with the 11 Macey Ave and 150 Harrison St project was to foster inclusion and create a well-integrated, welcoming space."

Mark Becker, Chief Operating Officer at Dexterra Group and interim President, NRB Modular Solutions.



# City of Toronto Supportive Housing

**BUILDING APPLICATION:** Affordable Housing  
**BUILDING TYPE:** Volumetric Modules  
**PROJECT LOCATION:** Toronto, Ontario  
**BUILDING SIZE:** Two Buildings - 27,000 sq.ft. each  
**PROJECT TIMELINE:** 10 Months

## Background

As part of the Housing Now initiative implemented by the City of Toronto in 2019, 11 City-owned sites were identified for the development of affordable housing. In May 2020, the City chose NRB to design, manufacture, and install 100 modular units of permanent supportive housing as Phase I of a pilot project.

## Challenge

We were tasked with the design, manufacturing, transportation, and installation of two affordable housing complexes in a timely manner to accommodate the rapid need for housing for the residents who are struggling to find a home in the City.

The first building, located on Macey Avenue in the area of Pharmacy and Danforth avenues, has 56 suites. The second building is located on Harrison Street near Dovercourt Road and Dundas Street and has 44 suites.

## Results at a Glance

The two buildings feature 100 single occupancy suites, with self-contained bathrooms and kitchens, individual climate control and a private living space. The central building has an indoor and outdoor amenity space, central laundry, commercial kitchen and dining area

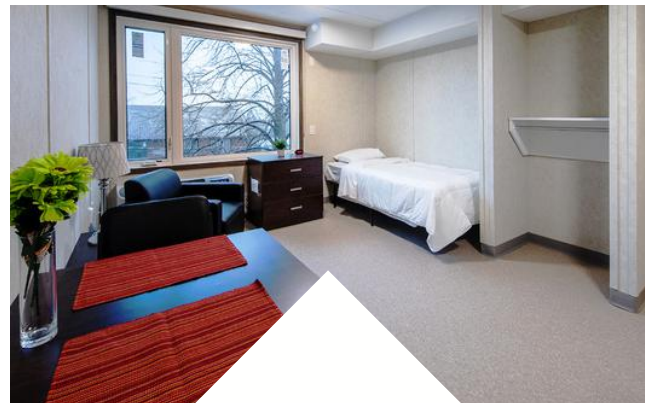
25% of the buildings' suites are accessible and Gold Certified by the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification. The structures also come equipped with a CCTV camera monitoring system, an in-suite intercom network, and exterior solar shades, which minimizes energy consumption.

This article was originally published in Modular Advantage Magazine, Sept-Oct 2022: 18-26. We have reprinted it with the permission of the author, John McMullen.



“We wanted to challenge the perception that modular buildings couldn’t seamlessly integrate within a community. To combat the stigma associated with homelessness, one of our key goals with the 11 Macey Ave and 150 Harrison St project was to foster inclusion and create a well-integrated, welcoming space.”

Mark Becker, Chief Operating Officer at Dexterra Group and interim President, NRB Modular Solutions.





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By: Paul Harrison



## **Bespoke & Unique: ANC's Modular Building Department Sets the Standards for Efficient and Responsible Construction in Canada**

### **History & Background**

After having worked in the construction industry for two decades, Andrew Neill founded ANC in 2017. With an extensive portfolio of large projects under his belt, Andrew has taken his company to soaring heights in the few short years since its birth.

"Andrew wears many hats within the organization; it's his pride and joy and one of the loves of his life. The hat he wears most proudly is his hardhat, and he can be seen with his boots on the ground more than at his desk." Says Sarina Gallo, ANC's Interior Design and Marketing lead.

"In 2019, ANC founded ANC Modular, which focuses exclusively on volumetric modular building components, as well as new modular innovations." Sabrina explains what led ANC to adopt the modular approach to building: "The ability to move quickly was grounded in the idea of putting people first, followed by lean principles and processes that would help us align with our goal. The industry is very exciting, having a significant and positive impact on affordable housing, the workforce, and the environment. To that end, we built a prototype, established our factory, and began recruiting talent and leadership. Not only is the business strategy behind the decision compelling, but the social aspect taps into the deeper meaning of the contribution we are making. It is very energizing."

**"The industry is very exciting, having a significant and positive impact on affordable housing, the workforce, and the environment."**





## THE PROCESS

Since modular builds are built in-house at the factory, one would think the process would differ from traditional builds, but Sabrina says this is not the case: "The construction process is very similar to traditional construction; it all starts at the planning & development stage. While we have modularity processes in place for efficiency, each project is bespoke and unique in its needs. We continually review and refine our processes, and this allows us to adapt and evolve in a rapidly changing environment and serve the rapid housing initiatives that we have been awarded with great fluidity."

## THE DIFFERENCE

But modular builds do differ from traditional builds in a few important ways. First, they are more efficient, and often more cost effective too: "The main final benefit of modular construction is derived from the increased speed of construction on site. We manufacture all the modular components ourselves, which allows us to plan, control, and reliably predict the progress of the work more accurately. The majority of the work is made in a factory, while sitework and foundations are simultaneously performed on the site. This time-saving benefit keeps the project on schedule and speeds up construction time, while still being efficient, taking the build to more of a manufacturing methodology. Additionally, working in a controlled environment is key and is largely driven by mitigating risks of traditional construction by minimizing delays and site disruptions. We do practice long lead procurement, which has been a benefit in efficiency and cost."



"We manufacture all the modular components ourselves, which allows us to plan, control, and reliably predict the progress of the work more accurately. The majority of the work is made in a factory, while sitework and foundations are simultaneously performed on the site."

## THE GROWING DEMAND

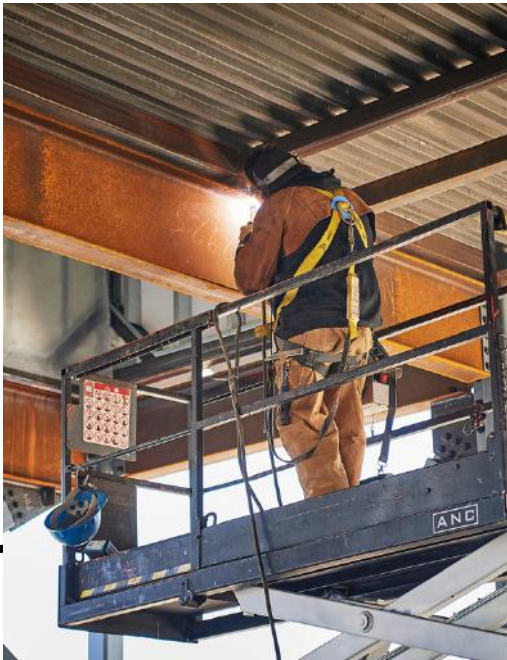
ANC is well-positioned to respond to the growing demand for rapid housing as modular building is considered one of the leading methods to solve the affordable housing shortage in Canada. For this reason, modular building has undergone a major boom in recent years. The Canadian Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC) created the Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) in 2020 in order to deal with the ongoing housing shortage in Canada. In the past three years, the RHI has injected \$3 billion into the modular market, along with another \$22 billion from the private sector, which has led to the construction of over 4,500 residences in Canada.



## THE MANUFACTURING PROCESS

As Andrew Neill notes: “Being able to start the manufacturing process before building permits are issued allows us to get ahead of schedules and provide ‘rapid housing’ which is not possible with conventional construction methods.” Needless to say, in order to keep up with the growing demand for housing in Canada, modular builds will play an integral role going forward.

Andrew further explains how the modular process streamlines the construction process to minimize disruption and maximize efficiency: “ANC has a ‘base’ modular ‘box’ design that was developed to be exceptionally fluid to many types of housing structures. Using our ‘base’ modular structure, we were able to design four very unique projects concurrently. A four-plex, a duplex, a townhome complex that had two one-floor homes, and three two-storey homes in one block, as well as a four-storey apartment building. All these projects used our base modular ‘box’ and ANC was able to configure them to each development’s needs.” Through these methods, ANC is often able to have projects go from the landing stage to the occupancy stage in as little as four weeks.



“Being able to start the manufacturing process before building permits are issued allows us to get ahead of schedules and provide ‘rapid housing’ which is not possible with conventional construction methods.”





## ANC DIVISIONS

In addition to modular builds, ANC has numerous other divisions, including custom homes, 3PL Logistics, construction management, and real estate development. As Sabrina Gallo states: “We offer a full-service experience in the construction landscape, and have teams heading our custom residential projects, commercial builds, and modular division. Our modular division tackles the manufacturing, assembly, and logistics for our modular projects, but we also fabricate components such as elevator shafts, and stairwells.”

“We have many valued trade-partners who are keen in pursuing modular construction and this is largely being driven by the absence of conditions that are typically navigated in the market. Factory production creates a consistent workforce environment that maintains productivity year-round. It provides a predictable, long-term, year-round business. The ability to apply their mastery and processes in a new environment has been rewarding, based on the feedback that we have received.” says Gallo.

It should come as no surprise that business is booming at ANC. They have multiple projects on the go, as well as some major ones that they have recently wrapped up. “Our team is so grateful for the opportunity to build modular buildings to support social housing initiatives for The City of Brantford and Six Nations Housing, and Temporary Lodging for the City of Mississauga Fire.” Sabrina continues: “We were recently awarded a 56 Unit housing development, 127 Modular units with the Canadian Helen Keller Center at 150 Eighth Street in the Etobicoke–Lakeshore neighborhood of Toronto. We are super excited about it and look forward to sharing the progression on LinkedIn!”







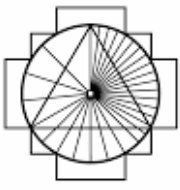
## THE FUTURE

With the modular division growing each day, the future is exciting at ANC. For their amazing work in modular building, ANC was awarded with the 2021 Canadian Homebuilders' Association's National Housing Award for Modular Innovation, Ontario Concrete Associations Award for Innovation, and Andrew Neill was recognized as a winner of the Top 40 under 40 in Canadian Construction by Onsite Magazine. ANC shows no signs of slowing down. Sabrina is confident that their methods are having many positive impacts in a variety of areas: "You will see us applying tech and innovation in a landscape that we are absolutely passionate about, and in a way that speaks to our social and responsibility philosophies as builders."

Work is bustling at ANC as the demand for efficient, and cost-effective housing in Canada is high. For this reason, ANC is always on the lookout for new talent. Anyone interested in an exciting career in construction in the Brantford area should forward their resumes to [info@ANC.ca](mailto:info@ANC.ca)

For more information on ANC, visit their website at <https://ANC.ca/>





**ADAPTIVE**  
H O M E S  
HIGH PERFORMANCE | PROGRESSIVE DESIGN

# A Modular Revolution In Revelstoke



By: Greg Akeson



## **A Modular Revolution in Revelstoke**

### **An Interview with Logan Ashley from Adaptive Homes**

#### **History & Philosophy**

Adaptive Homes is all about building high performance, manufactured, custom homes of all sizes. They are designed to lower carbon footprints, improve quality of life for their inhabitants, and to be accessible and affordable for everyone. One of the men behind Adaptive Homes, Logan Ashley, describes the company's beginnings as a collaboration based on similar core values and a vision for a more sustainable future.

It all began six years ago when Logan's now business partner, Jocoah, had the idea of building preconstructed, or prefab, homes. At the time, Logan had already been involved in his own business for a year and a half, building homes using rammed earth, a process of building homes with less of an environmental impact. Having built homes together in the past, Logan and Jocoah realized they had similar values: both had a knowledge of rammed earth builds, and both wanted to build more sustainable and efficient homes. So, after discussing their business plans, they joined forces and began constructing pre-manufactured homes in Revelstoke, British Columbia. Thus, Adaptive Homes was born.

**Having built homes together in the past, Logan and Jocoah realized they had similar values.**



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photo courtesy of @adpative.homes

## Process and Standards

Though not a process used by Adaptive Homes, the rammed earth concept remains an influence on Logan's environmentally conscious approach to construction. Rammed earth is a process whereby clay soil and lime are mixed to create layers that are reinforced with rebar and packed down. The effect is like a concrete wall, but it uses soil with a high clay content instead of concrete. Rammed earth is durable and retains heat well.

Passive Housing Standards are another key area for Adaptive Homes. Passive Housing certification began in Germany and made its way to North America, where it has become a required standard by the province of British Columbia. Logan describes the housing standards as: "based around levels of measurements that you want to reach for stuff like solar gain, air tightness, and the use of certain building materials, with the aim of reducing heating and cooling costs." In achieving high passive building standards, Adaptive Homes works closely with Vetta Windows for their high-performance glazed windows, 475 Performance for materials and insulation, SIGA for air barriers and weather barriers, the Canadian Homebuilders Association for their classes on passive building, and Passive House Canada for their training and support.

The journey to making homes more accessible will involve changes to the way mortgages are handled by the banks. Traditionally, mortgages are not approved if a customer decides to go with a prefab home. As Logan says, "I've talked to a lot of my clients where their mortgage specialists are not aware of other ways or knowledgeable in how to finance a build that is (pre)manufactured. Because it is 90% completed, the foundation is the only thing done on site. Once it is delivered, the build is only ready for appraisal at that moment, and the appraiser can only then provide the lump sum of 90%. Meanwhile other ways of private lending have to be arranged up until that point." It is clear the lending system has not kept pace with the homebuilding industry: a major roadblock to making homes more affordable and accessible in today's marketplace.

**Adaptive Homes works closely  
with Vetta Windows for their  
high-performance glazed  
windows**

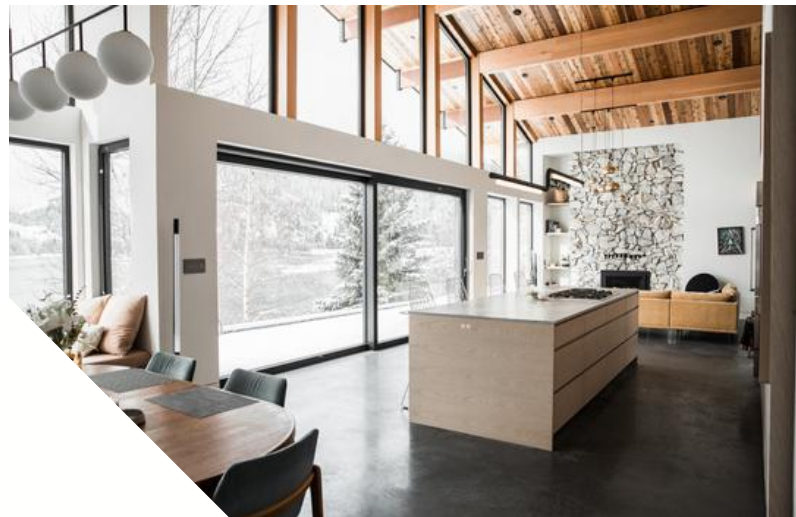


## The Future

In a labour market that is currently experiencing a lack of skilled workers, it is not so much the shortage of workers that Adaptive Homes is concerned with, but staying abreast of the housing shortage. As with any successful builder, Adaptive Homes is growing and as Logan says about his company, "if you want to make an impact through the construction industry, learn how to build houses to the highest standard out there in the construction industry, and also mix your lifestyle into your work, then by all means Adaptive Homes is a great place to work."

The future for Adaptive Homes involves innovating new building materials, making materials more affordable and accessible, and growing the business into new regions and territories. They are currently working on strategic partnerships with communities and municipalities as well as the lending sector to create a one-stop-shop for housing. Though challenges undoubtedly lie ahead, Adaptive Homes is poised to meet them head on in an innovative and environmentally responsible manner.

**For more information on Adaptive Homes,** visit their website at <https://adaptivehomes.org/>



**YOU WILL NEVER SUCCEED**  
You will never succeed

*You suck*

**DON'T**

**WHY?**

**YOU FAIL**

*Give up*

*You will lose*

*Give*

**UP**

*Now*

*Why bother?*

**HATE**

**HATE**

*Why bother?*

**Mental Health  
& Safety**

# STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE: PART 3

By Sandra Larmour, PhD (Clinical Psychologist) – Retired

*This is the third of three mini articles on Stress in the Workplace. A summary of the first two articles focused on 1) recognizing stress, and 2) an explanation of external and internal stress with the focus on the former. This third article focusses on the latter, which can and often does lead to serious mental health issues. These issues can include a decreased ability to focus, sleep difficulties, and a decreased ability to interact with both co-workers and management. Often these internal stressors can manifest as panic attacks, strokes, ulcers, and even heart attacks. All these issues can exert a serious impact on safety in the workplace.*

**A 2021 article by Erin Stephenson**, stated that "in the US, suicide rates for construction people are 3X higher than the national average". She further documents another study, indicating that 1 in 5 construction workers suffer from mental illness. While these may be US statistics, there is no reason to assume the stats are any different in Canada.

Further compounding the issues is that the construction industry remains a primarily male dominated field. This fact permeates the culture as men are unwilling to permit their colleagues to become aware of their difficulties, and thus refuse to talk about what is troubling them. This strong man façade makes it difficult, if not impossible, for men to seek help. They suffer in silence, adding credence to mental illness being called "**the Silent Epidemic**," which impacts construction workers around the world.

While many internal stressors are born in the workplace, there are others which are not work related, such as finance, relationships, and depression issues. However, these can seriously impact the workplace.

While the construction industry needs to be commended for striving to increase physical safety, it needs to implement a similar dedication to increasing Mental Wellness to further enhance physical safety. If the industry promotes only physical safety, then they are only addressing half of the safety issues.

There has been much more attention in recent years to mental health. **More resources are now available** to companies wishing to either provide services to their employees, or, at least point them in the right direction. One great place to start is the Canadian National standard for Psychological Health and Safety. It provides tools, resources, and guidelines that companies can action to promote mental wellness. Managers should educate employees on their rights regarding mental disabilities and assist them by providing sources of information that can be of help in time of serious need. Your supervisors, crew bosses, and other persons in charge, should have ready access to this information, to distribute as they deem necessary. If you don't give the information to them, where will they get it as they will not ask for help? The bottom line is you may save someone's life.

**In closing**, the construction industry has made huge strides in safety in the workplace. There could be further strides made in safety and profits once the industry realizes the importance of "Mental Wellness". Who is to say if the accidents that are occurring are truly accidents, or the impact of internal stressors!



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# CANADIAN

CONSTRUCTION JOURNAL







# Coming in the Next Issue

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