
From: John Hargraves [mailto:JHargraves@sioc.co.nz]
Sent: Thursday, 8 December 2011 11:39 p.m.
To: Mark Zarifeh
Subject: RE: 309 Durham St - Methodist Church

Dear Mark

Our Company maintained the pipe organ (dating from 1906) in Durham St Methodist Church from 1975 until the first earthquake in September 2010. In that time we tuned and serviced it on a 6 weekly schedule and from time to time restored various parts of the organ as priority required.

For many years I personally serviced the Canterbury organs including Durham St (1976 – 1995). For the last few years and at the present time, Christopher Templeton is the staff member responsible for tuning all the instruments in the Canterbury region that our company looks after including Durham St. He is an experienced organ builder and tuner and has inspected and drafted all the earthquake damage assessments and reports for the Company.

On September 22 2010 he first inspected the Durham St organ after the September 4 earthquake which did not seriously damage the organ as much as the Church. After this inspection and subsequent personal, phone and email communication with Tim Fahy of Arrow International the project managers for 30 Methodist churches in the Christchurch Circuit we prepared a plan and estimate for dismantling and removing the organ. (I have attached a copy of this document).

On 11 November 2010 we received word from Tim Fahy that the Church had been propped and temporarily strengthened sufficiently for the engineers to grant restricted access to contractors for the purpose of removing furnishings and fittings of value (including the organ) from the building. We had continuing discussions about the insurance aspects of the work and methodology of the removal including design of a scaffold platform and hoist to facilitate the work.

Then the Boxing day earthquake quake damaged the church further requiring another engineers report and a new round of temporary strengthening of the building. On 20 Jan 2011 we received advice from Tim Fahy that the loss adjuster and the engineer had given clearance for us to proceed with removal of the organ. All our dealings were with Arrow, and several times we responded to Wallace Woodley's concerns (Durham St organist and member of the church council). Throughout the preparations and the actual removal work we worked closely with Arrow, and gained confidence in their expertise and professional attitude. We had to trust the engineers reports that the building was safe enough for us to work in. The work was planned meticulously by Neil Stocker, Christopher Templeton and myself and some changes were made to the removal scaffolding platform at our request to make it safer in the event of another quake.

We planned to do this work in a 2 week period from 14 – 24 Feb 2011. We assigned a team of 6 men to the job under the direction of our factory manager Neil Stocker (43 years with SIOC since apprenticeship from school). At the time of the earthquake on 22 February the dismantling was almost complete with just a few heavy components and the organ framework left to complete that Tuesday afternoon ready for packing on Wednesday and uplift of the containers on Thursday exactly on schedule. On Tuesday 22nd February we planned to have 8 men on site, but at the time of the quake, Christopher Templeton (20 yrs with SIOC since apprenticeship from school, organbuilder, archivist) had not yet arrived from Timaru due to a flat battery and Ross Weir (Christchurch sound engineer, electrician, amateur organbuilder, casual volunteer) was in the toilet at Aldersgate. There were 6 men in the Church, - Neil Stocker (foreman), Moritz Fassbender (1 year with SIOC - organbuilder from Germany , Scott Lucy (2 yrs with SIOC casual labourer), Joshua Anderson (1st year apprentice organbuilder with SIOC), Paul Dunlop (CHCH Optometrist, Church organist, Amateur organbuilder, casual volunteer), Neil Hooper (2yrs with SIOC, organbuilder from UK).

The loss of 3 of our men and injury to 3 others has been a terrible shock to myself and all members of our company. The 3 injured men have all recovered well and are back at work. We have all pulled together and are working well, mostly since that time doing similar organ rescue work in Christchurch of which there is still an appreciable amount to do. Some of the most difficult ones such as the two cathedrals and St Marys Merivale are still ahead of us. We have received amazing support form all over the world and are fortunate to have some substantial work in other centres to give our men relief from the trauma of working in Christchurch amongst the wreckage of much of our life's work. Our current principal project rebuilding the organ of St Johns Anglican Cathedral Napier is an example.

I joined SIOC at the end of 1968, its founding year and 3 months before completion of my apprenticeship served in Feilding. I became a director when the company was restructured in 1969 and with my wife Val bought out the other 2 directors in 2006 and 2008. Val and I are now co-directors of the company which employs 12 full time staff and a similar number of part time casuals and subcontractors. SIOC maintains about 300 pipe organs throughout NZ and 3 states of Australia where we have done about 20 significant restoration and rebuilding projects.

We are happy to attend the Royal Commission (please send a summons in any case) and provide any information, records, such as emails, correspondence, timesheets, photographs etc. that we have that might assist the Commission in its work.

Regards

John Hargraves



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From: Mark Zarifeh [<mailto:Mark.Zarifeh@royalcommission.govt.nz>]
Sent: Tuesday, 22 November 2011 5:04 p.m.
To: John Hargraves
Subject: 309 Durham St - Methodist Church

Dear Mr Hargraves,

The Royal Commission of Inquiry into building failure caused by the Canterbury earthquakes is currently looking into the failure of the number of buildings, in the CBD, including the Durham Street Methodist Church.

I spoke to your wife this afternoon. I am in the process of preparing this matter for hearing. The hearing for this building is set down for Tuesday 31 January 2012 at 9.30am. It will be necessary for you to attend and give brief evidence as to your involvement in the attempt to remove the organ from the Church.

Please let me know if you require a summons and I will arrange for one to be sent to you.

In the meantime I would appreciate it if you could prepare an outline of your involvement and forward it to me. I will then come back to you and we can discuss the matter.

Thank you for your assistance. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mark Zarifeh,
Counsel Assisting,
Canterbury Earthquakes Royal Commission

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