



Building success opens new doors

Kelly Deeks

When the first new home built by Rotorua's AB Builders ended up being a well recognised and well publicised award winner, the door to the next level of business was swung wide open for the building firm, as its previous mainstay of renovations and additions gave way to more new home builds.

AB Builders founder Aaron Brown has been building for 24 years, beginning his career with an apprenticeship in the high-end Auckland subdivision Karaka Park.

For the past 10 years, he has lived and worked in Rotorua as a self-employed builder, building up AB Builders from scratch as an unknown builder in a small town.

"I was new in town, but it was boom time," Aaron says. "Everyone was doing renovations and additions to improve their homes."

AB Builders soon built up a reputation for quality work, and word of mouth and referrals gave the company a steady stream of work and the opportunity to grow. Aaron now employs site manager Henry Price, a carpenter, an administration person, and a supervised apprentice.

AB Builders has trained several apprentices over the past 10 years, including a runner up in the New Zealand Apprentice of the Year competition. The company has completed a wide range of renovation and alteration projects, both residential and commercial.

AB Builders tendered for and won the Lake Tarawera Cabin project with Darryl Church Architecture, which is one of New Zealand's most awarded architecture practices.

The project took three years from concept to completion at the end of 2014, with the build by AB Builders lasting about seven months.

The 150sqm Lake Tarawera Cabin, built for owners Mark and Erin Wansbrough, won the National People's Choice Award at the Architectural Designers New Zealand/Resene Awards late last year, for Rotorua architectural designer Darryl Church. The design was also a finalist in the Residential and Colour in Design categories.

The lakeside retreat, set amongst native bush at Lake Tarawera, is designed with access to all rooms coming off a central covered deck, with the journey from space to space taking residents outside to

brace the temperature and breathe in the smells of the surrounding bush. 90 per cent of the floor plan

is allocated to the deck. "Darryl's comments were it was some of the best workmanship he's seen," Aaron says. "It was a very bespoke design, and you couldn't hide anything."

The home owners were equally impressed, saying as the build went on, they could see Aaron getting more and more in to what they were trying to achieve, growing to love it, and becoming really proud of what he was doing.

AB Builders is active throughout the Bay of Plenty, currently completing a substantially sized garage/sleepout in Rotorua and soon to start a new dwelling inside a commercial shed in Tauranga.



Ninety per cent of the floor plan of the Lake Tarawera Cabin, built for Mark and Erin Wansborough, is allocated to a large deck.