

Rock-solid foundation produces a gem

Arrowtown | Otago



As the old story goes, building on rock is the best and, for Andy McRae of The Builders.co.nz, it's never been more true, with his clients enjoying an undeniable foundation for their sparkling new home.

In order to take advantage of the postcard views of Lake Hayes, and Brow and Coronet Peaks, the 400 sqm of 'contemporary and masculine' design is fixed to the most impermeable surface imaginable. Rock

anchors are drilled into the mammoth schist outcrop, supported by rebars, in situ concrete, and cantilevers for the lakeside decking. Softer quartz seams added the odd challenge; however, the sheer solidity of the base rock gives the deceptive impression that the house is merely resting on top. Once the base was secure, Andy's hardworking team, led by foreman Tony 'Jock' Dunstan, got down to the business of matching the home to the majesty of the mountains in the backdrop.



Although unmistakably modern, the home boasts a swathe of natural materials that complement the alpine landscape. Schist drapes the bottom storey and east of the home while, inside, complementary timbers are included to accentuate the design. So, with the design and the engineering ticks of approval registered, how do the people that count find their new home?

"The clients are rapt with it," Andy says, adding that the feedback from passerby 'that


it looks amazing from the road' is also satisfying. What about the inside? Attention is grabbed first by the imposing mountain peaks through the floor-to-ceiling windows, then by expansive oak-lined roof lanterns that flood the living areas with natural light.

Modern, future-proofed specifications are throughout, from the automated electric blinds and retractable louvres to the AV system that covers the entire home. Visual entertainment is also accounted for, and the

main living area has not one, but two, recessed television housings. With a set either side of the fixed unit sporting a decorative gas fireplace, his and hers in 2018 has gone a step further from the two-sink bathroom. The attention to detail in the planning and finishing is a noticeable point.

Warmth during the Arrowtown winters is no problem, thanks to full underfloor heating getting extra help from an internal

slab over the top of the concrete foundations. North-facing glazing works with the dormers and above-spec insulation to keep the cool of the snow outside, where it belongs.

Building on bedrock can have its challenges but, for these fortunate owners, Andy, 'Jock' and the team were able to dig up a gem. 

NZCB Member / Andy McRae
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