

**The Market.**

Things are still running along and some builders are telling us they still have plenty to keep them busy in the New Year and towards the end of the financial year. Interest rates have gone up, auctions have slowed right down, but I believe that certain areas of Geelong that really haven't peaked yet and if we get something definite on the ring roads, I think Geelong will still remain buoyant and protected from the rest of the state for a while.

**Prices.**

I had a timber representative in the office last week asking me if I had heard or seen anything about the timber price increases being sort by two of the largest timber producers. I hadn't at the time but have since received some information. The word is that they are looking for between 3% & 5% increases as they haven't received an increase in over two years and the fall down of their product at the present time is too large along with other increases in on going costs such as wages, cartage, insurance etc.. I don't believe they will get anything like the 5% straight up, but I could see them going for 3 to 3½% now and a month or two down the track trying again. If they got their first increase it would depend on the sales of pine over the following months to whether or not they would try again, because if things slowed down and they increased their prices again they would find that in the following months they would have to discount their product to get any future sales. They could find that later on they would be discounting even further than the increases they had received. If you had a frame and trusses that was around \$9,000.00, and the timber price went up about 3%, then the cost of that job would go up anywhere between \$130.00 to \$170.00. You can expect the first increase in February 2004.

**Gable vents**

Prices have just gone up last month by some 5%. This is the first increase in these products for some 3½ years. What amazes me is a lot of these are imported from America and now the Aussie dollar has changed you would have thought they would have gone down, not up.

**Light hearted.**

**Having a bad day?**

There was a case in one hospital's intensive care ward where the patients always died in the same bed, on a Sunday morning, about 11. 00 am, regardless of their medical condition. This puzzled the doctors and some even thought it had something to do with the supernatural. No one could solve the mystery... as to why the deaths occurred around 11am on Sundays. So a world wide team of experts was assembled to investigate the cause of the incidents. The next Sunday morning, a few minutes before 11 am, all doctors and nurses nervously waited outside the ward to see for themselves what the terrible phenomenon was all about. Some were holding wooden crosses, prayer books and other holy objects to ward off the evil spirits. Just when the clock struck 11.... Pookie Johnson, the part-time Sunday sweeper, entered the ward and unplugged the life support system so that he could use the vacuum cleaner.

### ***Still having a bad day?***

The average cost of rehabilitating a seal after the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska was \$80,000.00. At a special ceremony, the two most expensively saved animals were being released back into the wild amid cheers and applause from onlookers. A minute later, in full view, a killer whale appeared and ate them both.

### ***What? Still think your day is bad?***

Terrorist Khay Rahnajet didn't pay enough postage on a letter bomb. It came back with "return to sender" stamped on it. Forgetting it was the bomb; he opened it and was blown to bits.

There now, feeling better!

### **New lines**

We have taken on the distributorship of "truss joist" (TJI) from Pine Solutions. The range of products includes the Microllam LVL, rim board, Timberstrand and the truss joist in 70 mm & 90 mm. We will towards the middle of next year be holding a special night where we will be setting up a sample of all the products and holding an information night along with a BBQ and a few drinks. You may have seen this advertised as the "silent floor" system with the elephant walking on it. Well, on the night we will have an elephant on the floor system itself. We are building up a range of the products and once the new timber shed is built early next year we will then convert the old timber shed to store the full range of products. These products are in direct opposition to the Hyspan and the Tillings products and the prices that we are selling them at are the best in Geelong. The truss joist product is, to look at it, similar to the Hybeam except the top and bottom flanges are made of solid pine (usually p12 or p15). They come in 70 mm & 90 mm wide which is much wider than Hyspan so you don't have to go to the next size up (in most cases) to get a span, you can go to the wider one to achieve that span. They can be mixed and matched if necessary. In the case of allowing for a pool table you would normally put them in at 300mm centres. With these you can go to a 90mm wide one at 450mm centres.

### **New staff.**

We have just employed a new office girl on a part time basis. Her name is Felicity and she comes to us with a number of years experience. She will be replacing Joanne who after nearly 4 years with us is moving to the sunshine state with her family. We wish Joanne and Geoff all the best in the future.

### **Phone numbers.**

Since the last edition we have had some direct lines changed. Find below the new numbers to the estimating and detailing areas.

### ***Estimating:***

Shannyn Gourley 5249 4408, Damien Marchant 5249 4409, Steve Grant 5249 4405, Matthew Lauder 5249 4407.

***Customer Development Officers:***

Tim Watson (m) 0407 232 884, direct line 5249 4402 (you will have a better chance of catching the customer development officers on their mobile numbers) and Lisa Montagnat (m) 0409 940 757, direct line 5249 4406.

***Detailing:***

***Trusses:*** Alistair Elliott 5249 4410, Damien Marchant 5249 4409

***Walling:*** Darren Benn, logistics manager & head wall detailer 5249 4403.

**Directors Direct Lines:** Doug Maxwell 5249 4411, (m) 0417 506 075 & Clive Martella 5249 4412, (m) 0409 946 093.

**Christmas.**

Our office will be closed on the ***23<sup>rd</sup> of December*** at 12.30 pm. We will have a skeleton crew back on the ***5<sup>th</sup> of Jan. 2004*** and the balance of the crew will be back on the ***12<sup>th</sup> of Jan. 2004***. All mail will still be collected daily.

**Doug, Clive and all at M.B.** wish you and your families a wonderful and safe Christmas and New Year. We thank you for the support you have afforded us this year and in the past, and we look forward to servicing you in 2004.

**To finish off:**

*The secret to a long life. . . . .*

A tough old cowboy told his grandson that the secret to a long life was to sprinkle gunpowder over his porridge every morning for breakfast.

The grandson did this every morning and, sure enough, he lived to the ripe old age of 98. When he died he left 14 children, 28 grandchildren and 35 great grandchildren and a five metre hole in the wall of the crematorium.

Pride in our product

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Pride in our service