



1 18-month old Benjamin Gaffney checks out the book with dad David (left) and author Phil (right). 2 Book launch with author Phil Wilkins (credit IPENZ). 3 Front cover of the book.

CHRISTCHURCH - 'OUR UNDERGROUND STORY'

Beca for Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild **Project Location:**
Nationwide



Canterbury earthquakes involved a huge programme of infrastructure work that has never been seen before in New Zealand. That's why the Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team (SCIRT) was formed – to help repair and rebuild damaged essential infrastructure such as water, storm water and wastewater systems, roads, bridges, water reservoirs and retaining walls. Christchurch-based civil structural engineer Phil Wilkins was part of the SCIRT team – contracted to work on the asset assessment and prioritisation of structures through to design. Inspired by the significant contribution SCIRT made to rebuilding Christchurch's underground infrastructure, first-time author Phil combined his passion for engineering, and love for education to write 'Christchurch – Our Underground Story'. The vibrant, interactive children's book shines a light beneath the rubble and concrete to demystify the role engineers played in putting the city back together. Phil worked closely with illustrator Martin Coates, a chartered chemical engineer by profession, who has a passion for turning complex subjects into pictures, often with a touch of humour to help bring messages to life.

A unique and innovative solution, the purpose behind the book is to: 1) Educate and inspire young minds and the general public about the world of engineering, 2) Simplify the complexity of engineering, 3) Encourage a wider understanding of the important work engineers do, and not to take what is vital for day-to-day living for granted, 4) A chance to look back to when the earthquakes happened and see how far we have come, 5) Celebrate the unsung engineering heroes that rebuilt the city.

The book is helping raise funds for the Ronald McDonald House South Island (Ronald McDonald House) and has received a huge amount of support and interest from the engineering and wider community, and local media. With 1000 printed copies sold out a week after launch, it has raised just under \$20,000 for Ronald McDonald House. There is still a lot of interest in the book, so much so that a second print run is being organised to meet the demand. There is also a focus on getting the books into schools, and with the support of SCIRT's five main contracting firms (Fletchers, Fulton Hogan, MacDow, City Care, and Downer), 300 books will be going to schools throughout Canterbury.

Judging & Copyright Statement

This project is an entrant in the 2016 INNOVATE NZ Awards of Excellence competition. The winners will be celebrated at our Awards Gala Dinner on Saturday, 12th August 2017 in Taupo.

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