

# JOHN GREEN: HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP SOCL

We were delighted to attend the Society of Construction Law's annual dinner last week at which our managing director and founder, John Green, was recognised for his extensive contributions to the practice of construction law with an Honorary Life Membership.



John is one of New Zealand's best known and most respected construction arbitrators, adjudicators, and mediators, having been appointed in more than 1,200 building disputes to date. He is also the founder and driving force behind the establishment and development of the Building Disputes Tribunal, the New

Zealand International Arbitration Centre (NZIAC), the New Zealand Dispute Resolution Centre (NZDRC), the BuildSafe Security of Payment Scheme (BuildSafe), and the New Zealand Family Dispute Resolution Centre (FDR Centre).

The SOCL's award of an Honorary Life Membership recognises John's contributions to the practice of construction law and dispute resolution in the construction industry, which go far and beyond simply establishing his own practice. Rather, it celebrates the contributions John has made over a period of more than 30 years including establishing the Building Disputes Tribunal, improving access to justice by designing, developing and delivering effective and cost efficient dispute resolution processes and services, supporting, training and mentoring students, colleagues and contractors alike, regularly speaking and engaging with the construction and legal sectors at seminars, conferences and workshops, establishing and providing substantial open source resources to both sectors including the highly respected quarterly journals, BuildLaw and ReSolution, and the BuildRight suite of Conditions of Contract for residential building, acting as a Weathertight Homes Adjudicator for almost 10 years, establishing the BuildSafe Security of Payment Scheme, and actively participating in and volunteering countless hours of time to various community, interest and membership groups.

This has included serving two terms as Chairman of a school board of trustees, serving the Master Builders Association of which he was President, 12 years as Council member of the Arbitrators' and Mediators' Institute of New

Zealand (AMINZ) including two years as President, as well as being a founding Council Member of the Society of Construction Law. Although he will probably never tell you, he has also regularly appeared on television in relation to building dispute matters including as a regular advisor on Fair Go as well as a starring role as the mediator in the TV series, Trade Wars.

What many people also do not know is how John even came to be working in this area, having started his life as a contractor quite literally sneaking out of school to “dig ditches”. At the start, it was John’s contracting experience, and in particular his experience as a litigant seeking to recover payment due under construction contracts, that caused him to engage first hand in dispute resolution processes. As a party to those processes, he quickly concluded that there had to be a better and more efficient way of resolving building and construction disputes than litigation through the courts. This led John to go on to study law and arbitration only to find that the practice of arbitration in the early 90’s was no better or different than litigation. John responded by developing new and innovative arbitration rules and procedures that better met the needs of the sector. This then led to the establishment of the Building Disputes Tribunal which is widely recognised and respected as the leading private specialist dispute resolution service for the building and construction sector in New Zealand.

John’s desire to identify and deliver practical and effective processes from the end consumer’s point of view has contributed significantly to the success of the business models he has developed. The key motivation has always been to selflessly serve the community and to contribute to the positive development of processes and those individuals who deliver those processes.

How do I know so much about John’s background? It’s not because John is a self-promoter. That is certainly not the case – he would be the last to sing his own praises. I know because I’m John’s daughter and also because I have had the pleasure of working

with him for the last two and a half years to continue to develop his vision of providing accessible, proportionate, and effective dispute resolution services both in New Zealand and further abroad. I see first hand day in and day out how much time and energy John invests into his work and serving the needs of the community.

John Quincy Adams once said: “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader”.

I believe these words perfectly define the leader that John is. The example he sets for us all as to what we can seek to achieve, and more importantly, how we should go about achieving it, is an inspiration.

I could not be more proud to call John both my colleague and my father and I would like to take this opportunity to not only celebrate his successes by sharing this with you, but also to thank the Society for recognising John and all his contributions to date.

by Catherine Green



Catherine Green, Executive Director  
Building Disputes Tribunal