



A match made for building

and new esky it was off to site to make sure my very first project was being built exactly they way the clients desired. Of course there were a few nerves, but with my past experience in the construction industry and by surrounding myself with well qualified tradespeople, I knew I would be off to a fantastic start," Peter says.

The early days of the business proved to be a busy time for the couple. After the birth of their son, he accompanied Anita to work above the panel shop. "Clients were surprised when a baby cried out in our little office, however thought it was great that we were having a go with all hands on deck!"

Turnover for the business increased dramatically, which meant Peter and Anita could expand the number of office staff to complement the tradespeople on site. "The rest is history," Peter says. "We now have four full-time office staff, a site supervisor, nine full-time employees and, of course, myself and Anita working in close cohesion."

With hard work comes success

In 2007, Schriek Building Group was recognised at the Master Builders Downs & Western Housing & Construction Regional Awards, winning the *Low Rise Multi-Residential Housing (Duplexes And Townhouses)* – up to \$2 million category.

"To finally win a Master Builders award in 2007 for Schriek Building Group was gratifying to say the least," Peter says. "After winning several regional and state awards for other builders, to win for ourselves surpassed exciting."

Husband and wife team Peter and Anita Schriek are testament to the fact that hard work and persistence are critical to success in the building and construction industry.

For Peter Schriek his fascination with building and construction started at a very early age when he began his first building project – a lean-to cubby house off the backyard shed. From those early beginnings, Peter, along with his wife Anita, has established a successful construction business that specialises in housing, multi-residential and small commercial projects.

Starting out

Peter originally commenced his career as an apprentice joiner before going on to become a Master Builders apprentice. After working in both Toowoomba and Brisbane, Peter then made the move to Victoria to complete a large project. Anita completed her secretarial/tourism studies in Brisbane before returning to Toowoomba, where she found a position within a local construction group.

The couple began business as Schriek Building Group Pty Ltd in January 2003. Making the decision to start up their own business was a major commitment and getting things up and

running was no easy task – especially with a young family to consider.

The couple had only recently returned to Toowoomba from Victoria with their two young daughters. "It was a huge decision at this point in our lives to actually sign up our first apprentice," Peter says. "Once the paperwork was completed, we rented an office space upstairs from my brother's panel shop, which we proudly constructed as our first small commercial project."

Peter recalls his first day on the job of his new company involved more than a few nerves. "After turning up to work with my old nailbag

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When asked, what the key to his company's success is, Peter says it is a combination of factors, including product knowledge, positive working relationships with subcontractors and suppliers and constant client interaction. "It is important to us that all clients personally meet our staff that they will be working in close contact with."

Peter's motto in life – "if it's meant to be it's up to me" also provides an insight into the culture of the company. "This motto has helped us create a company with great staff and suppliers that ensure all our projects are completed to an extremely high standard surpassing all client expectations."

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However, Peter and Anita's journey has not been without its challenges. "Fear of failure is definitely at the top of the list," Peter says. "It is a constant juggle to win projects, continuously service our current clients and still deliver projects on time and most importantly on budget, however not forgetting the most important ingredient of Schriek Building Group – quality."

A proud Master Builder

Starting out as a Master Builders apprentice 24 years ago, Peter then became a member of the association in 2002. The company has now developed a great relationship with Master Builders Downs & Western Regional Manager, Tony Ryder.

"With the building industry being such a vast and complex industry, it was apparent from the beginning that we needed to be in contact with an experienced team, hence the first dealings with Master Builders. They were also instrumental in helping us obtain my dream role – a builder's licence," Peter says.

"To this day, Master Builders often assists our company from minor to sometimes major decisions we face. Tony Ryder is a great asset to Schriek Building Group, and the Downs & Western region as well.

"We also advise our clients to contact Tony for any queries they may have in relation to their build, which in turn provides us with instant peace of mind on behalf of our clients. Our contact with other subdivisions of Master Builders has been just as helpful – whether it be in relation to a Telstra bill or insurance requirements."

Reflections on the industry

The strength of the local building and construction industry has provided the ideal environment for Schriek Building Group to grow and develop. However Peter believes there are a few issues which are of concern to the continued growth of the industry.

"Land costs and shortages, along with skills shortages, have been acknowledged as key issues of concern for the industry and definitely need to be addressed. The time constraints imposed for the completion of projects will also become an obstacle for the industry.

"Most importantly, the push for sustainable living has been strong and we all need to keep

working together so we can continue building not only aesthetically speaking stylish homes, but environmentally sustainable projects."

Peter also believes in the importance of continued training and professional development. "Up-skilling early in your trade is a must. It is much easier to continue the 'schooling' mode from your apprenticeship days right throughout your career.

"It is important to keep attending seminars produced by our industry's peers to keep abreast of the constant changes implemented throughout the industry."

Where to from here?

Directing a growing company doesn't leave much spare time for Peter to indulge his interests outside of work. Peter enjoys spending time with his family and friends and he also has plans to purchase his first road bike, which he is sure will take him on many adventures.

And what is in store for Schriek Building Group in the near future? For Peter it's all about streamlining, including a name simplification to SBG.

"We have always been 'name proud' throughout the industry, which helped us immensely in the beginning, however the pronunciation is sometimes difficult. We have been working closely with our marketing group for this to be a smooth transition", Peter explains.

"With key staff and the right team of professionals in place, it now opens up other windows of opportunity for Anita and I to invest in our own personal projects whilst overseeing our beloved company."

