

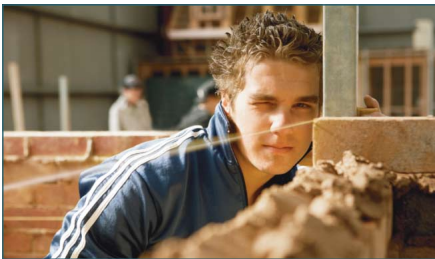
Aussie BRICKLAYER

Bricklayer & Apprentice
Makes good business sense

VICTORIA

February 2011

Apprentices to Receive \$5,500 Tax Free Bonus to Stay in Trade



ABBTF has welcomed the Federal Government's Trade Apprentice Income Bonus which will encourage apprentices to stay in their trade.

The Trade Apprentice Income Bonus, which incorporates the Tools for your Trade payment, will mean apprentices will receive tax-free payments as they reach milestones in their apprenticeship starting with a payment of \$800 after three months with a total of \$5,500 payable up to completion.

ABBTF's general manager, Geoff Noble, says a number of apprentices leave their trade before completion, exacerbating the skills shortage in the construction industry.

"We have had considerable success increasing the numbers of bricklaying apprentices coming into the trade through our generous subsidy for employers. Now the Federal Government's Bonus will directly encourage apprentices, through the milestone payments, to go right through and obtain their qualification", said Geoff Noble.

"The Bonus could not come at a better time, with the rebuilding process in Victorian towns affected by floods, due to start once the huge clean-up is completed. This is going to create a drain on construction so there are going to be many opportunities for bricklaying apprentices to get work in their local area," he added.

ABBTF can assist brick and blocklaying apprentices with information on the Trade Apprentice Income Bonus. For more information call 1300 66 44 96 or visit www.becomeabricklayer.com.au

Jayden Enjoying His Training

Jayden Haw is training in Certificate III Bricklaying and Blocklaying at GippsTAFE, Yallourn campus.

Jayden said "I've really got a lot out of my training at GippsTAFE. I've been able to go from simple labouring to building a real career in bricklaying. It's great – you get to work outside and every day is different.

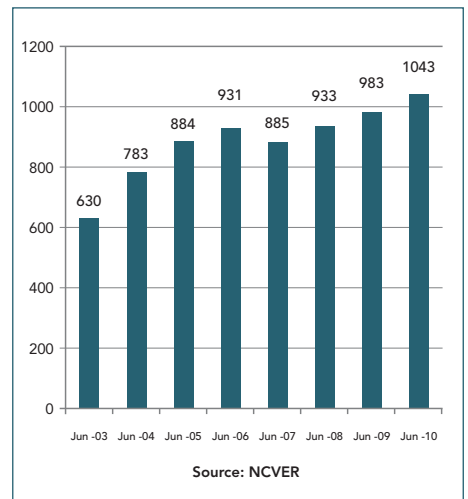
"At GippsTAFE, the teachers are laid-back and easy to get along with, but they really know their stuff, too. On site, your boss might not always have time to show you things, so the one-on-one time you get at TAFE gives you a chance to really learn your tools.

"My boss chose for me to come here, and I'm glad he did. It's pretty close to home and the facilities are good too," said Jayden.

ABBTF worked with GippsTAFE to establish bricklayer training in 2006 and they have gone from strength to strength since then. For further information, visit www.gippstafe.edu.au



Victoria's 1,000 Apprentices Milestone



Victorian apprentice numbers have topped 1,000 for the first time. This is by far the highest number of any state and represents more than a third of apprentice bricklayers in Australia.

The growth has been pleasing to ABBTF and the construction industry however, more apprentices and particularly numbers completing their training, are needed to address the skill shortage in bricklaying.

There are now over 200 apprentices each year completing their training to gain a Certificate III Bricklaying and Blocklaying qualification. This is double the completions five years ago.

Builders are reporting bricklayer shortages and through a sustained program of promoting the trade, supporting apprentice employment and training, ABBTF believe that future shortages will be minimised.

Michael Byrne – Award

Byrne Construction Systems has won the MBA National Specialist Contractor of the Year Award.

Michael Byrne and his company were featured in our September 2010 newsletter and this award highlights the quality and professional expertise of his company and the bricklaying industry.

Brian Reaps Rewards From Bricklaying



Brian with 2nd Year apprentice Steve and brother Robbie Morgan

Bricklaying contractor Brian Taig reckons he is in the ideal profession and is now reaping the rewards of all his hard work.

Brian started his company Pro Brick (Vic) 15 years ago and is based at Chirnside Park. He and his brother used to work on weekends labouring for Phil Goodwin and they eventually decided to take up bricklaying apprenticeships with him. Altogether Brian has been working in bricklaying for 24 years.

"We start early and finish early, that way I can spend time with my kids. We work hard, but the rewards are great", said Brian.

He tells young people considering a career in bricklaying that "You can make as much money as you want if you are prepared to work hard for it. We have a fair bit on at the moment, so my brother James and his team have been working with us. I would certainly put on more apprentices at the right time", Brian concluded.

Brian has had success with apprentices including Bonnie Magill, now qualified, who was featured on Channel 7 last year as part of a story on women in trades. He currently has Steve Morgan, a second year apprentice who works with older brother Robbie who is also now qualified. Another apprentice is about to be signed up showing Brian's commitment to training young people.

One of Brian's past apprentices gained his qualifications and then started his own gang four years ago and now has ten people working for him. Another success story for Brian.

When Brian is not working in the business, he enjoys spending time with his wife Melinda and their children.

Heritage Conservation in the Lime Light

The Trowel Trades Department of Holmesglen Institute held an industry evening on 'LIME-Conserving our Heritage' late last year. The purpose of the evening was to highlight the use and skills of working with lime, especially in regards to the restoration of heritage buildings. The night included guest speakers, displays and a skills demonstration on lime slaking.

Holmesglen is working with industry and heritage professionals to raise awareness of heritage materials and the need to preserve our historical buildings and streetscapes from the ravages of further 'progress'.

Guest speakers on the night talked of the use of lime within the industry. David Young, a Heritage consultant, spoke of understanding traditional building materials. Fraser Brown, Conservation Architect from Lovell Chen Architects and Heritage Consultants in conjunction with John Franchesini from Sharp & Howells Pty Ltd, discussed matching properties of historical mortars with available materials.

The event was supported by approx. 120 people, including Heritage Victoria, The Melbourne Heritage Restoration Fund, ABBTF, employers, industry representatives and suppliers.

New ABBTF Website Launched



A new website has been launched by ABBTF.

www.becomeabricklayer.com.au has been redesigned to make it more attractive and informative for those seeking a career as a bricklayer or blocklayer.

Geoff Noble, ABBTF's general manager, said "The website makes it much easier for young people to find out about a career in brick and blocklaying. It points out all the good reasons for becoming a bricklayer.

Information about the structure of ABBTF and its strategies, is available on another website www.abbtf.com.au.

The become a bricklayer website is continually updated to provide latest news on success stories, government actions, newsletters and other issues affecting the trade. Check it out now for the latest on bricklaying.

ABBTF "Keep Australia Working" in Bendigo

The Federal Government funded jobs expo "Keep Australia Working" was held in Bendigo late last year. The event was aimed at school leavers and the unemployed to provide employment opportunities in central Victoria.

Kevin Sheedy, former Bombers coach, attended the expo to encourage and support young people. Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE (BRIT) and ABBTF ran a Try-a-Trade with trainers Colin Blow and Neil Pickering demonstrating the art of bricklaying and teaching people the skills of the trade.

The 2,000 people who attended showed great interest in the event and many took advantage of the jobs on offer. A number of "Keep Australia Working" events will be held in future and ABBTF is committed to attend and promote bricklaying.



L-R Neil Pickering (BRIT) with Kevin Sheedy



BRIT Trainer Colin Blow

