

Lessons learned from one of New Zealand's most challenging civil engineering projects: rebuilding the earthquake damaged pipes, roads, bridges and retaining walls in the city of Christchurch 2011 - 2016.

Lions roar back into the city centre

Story: Bridge of Remembrance and Memorial Arch

Theme: Construction

A web story about the return of the stone lions to the Memorial Arch.

This document has been provided as an example of a tool that might be useful for other organisations undertaking complex disaster recovery or infrastructure rebuild programmes.

For more information about this document, visit www.scirtlearninglegacy.org.nz



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Lions roar back into the city centre

This week, after two years away, Christchurch's beloved stone lions roared back to their rightful place poised either side of the Triumphal Arch by the Avon River.

The Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team (SCIRT) has been working on the quake-damaged arch and Bridge of Remembrance on Oxford Terrace site since 2013.

SCIRT's Downer team has been undertaking complex internal strengthening work to ensure the Category I heritage structures meet the new building standard and can survive significant seismic activity.

Gracing the minor arches either side of the central arch, the lions represent the British Empire and are depicted fresh from conquest. With one paw resting on the spoils of war, each lion is tense, ready for action. The stone lions, which each weigh about five tonnes, were carved by Welsh-born Christchurch carver and art teacher Frederick George Gurnsey.

Modern stonemasons have been restoring the symbolic features of the memorial, which include a cross, torches, coat of arms, laurel wreaths, bundle of reeds (fascines) and rosemary for remembrance.

At the 1924 opening ceremony, Governor General Viscount Jellicoe said, "... this memorial is to speak not only for and to this generation but to countless generations yet to come ... the few extra months spent upon the work are as yet nothing compared with the result is it hoped to obtain".

SCIRT's quake-strengthening and repairs of the Triumphal Arch are expected to be complete by late 2015.



SCIRT's Downer team, including Mark White (left), places a stone lion back into position on the Triumphal Arch.

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