

Nelson Edition

Leader

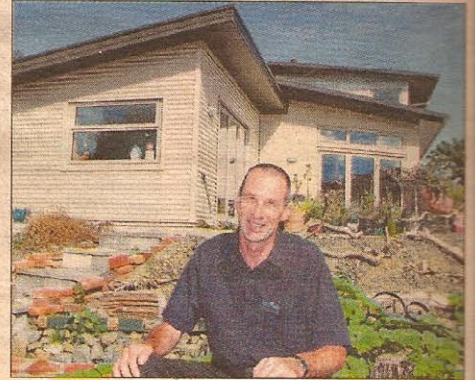
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2009

Edwardian day out



ICE WHEELS: Christine Bourke, Jungle Payne and Melissa Reid get into the spirit of Fairfield House's upcoming Edwardian Day Out. Photo Matt Lawrey

Fairfield time warp



LOVING IT: Richard Popenhagen at a recently built eco-friendly house in Nelson's Shakespeare Walk designed by Helen Richards. Photo/208924/Matt Lawrey.

Free eco-building advice service

By MATT LAWREY

Nelson's Richard Popenhagen reckons he has the best job in the world. After over 30 years in the building industry, Richard has been appointed Nelson City Council's first eco building design adviser.

Richard, who spent the last seven years working as a building inspector for the council, has a contract until June 2010 to provide independent advice to Nelsonians about building or renovating.

He is able to offer people two hours of free advice onsite as well as answer questions over the phone and via email. Richard's goal is to increase the uptake of environmentally-friendly technologies so more people live in healthier, drier, more efficient homes.

He says one of the beauties of his role is that he is not trying to sell something. "A lot of advice out there isn't necessarily independent," he says.

Richard has already been in the job for a couple of months and is loving it.

"The best part is seeing the recognition in people that they can make a difference, that they can get their homes performing better. It's empowering," he says.

CONTINUED Page 2