

BORETTA CONSTRUCTION 2002 LTD.

Boretta Construction continues to build on strong foundation

BY P. J. MEEKS

FOR GREG FAST, President of Boretta Construction, his biggest challenge has been striking the right balance between old and new.

After all, when he took over the company reigns in 1998, which his father and partners began in 1984, Boretta was already well established and respected. So for Fast, continuing to build on a strong foundation based on tried and true principles, but being able to adapt to new construction technologies and practices seemed like a logical approach in maintaining their competitiveness.

The underpinnings of that foundation have been an adherence to integrity and honesty in all that Boretta does, a strong commitment to earn the respect and loyalty of staff, along with always having a well-laid plan for the future.

Located at 1383 Dugald Road, Boretta considers itself a general contractor and construction manager, with a focus on multi-residential, commercial, institutional and industrial projects. The company employs 10 office staff and 25 field specialists. Led by Fast, it also includes William Danners, vice president and chief estimator and Fely Deleon, secretary treasurer and chief financial officer, both of whom worked with the senior Fast and were already shareholders.

Fast believes that one of the key factors of Boretta's success has been its operating philosophy. "We don't function with a hierarchy. We are all involved in making the decisions," says Fast. Expanding on this philosophy, he notes, "The more eyes there are looking over projects, the fewer the problems."

Fast also believes that if everyone is working as a team and for the same cause everyone succeeds and, in turn, the company succeeds. Coupled with its business principles, extended to subtrades, architects and clients, setting the groundwork for successful projects, mutual satisfaction and a job well done.

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ing for the same cause, and if everyone succeeds, the company succeeds as well. This same belief extends to the various trades, architects, building owners and others Boretta works with in the construction industry. "Maintaining a good rapport with the trades means paying on time," says Fast. "Everyone is entitled to a good life."

Treating staff, clients and subtrades professionally and honestly has gained the company accolades, describing Boretta as a company demonstrating expertise, knowledge and cooperation, to providing sound on-site supervision and exceptional administration.

Fast modestly states, "We build a product that we would want for ourselves," and aim to satisfy client expectations, yet work within their budget restraints. Fast adds the trades have come to acknowledge this consistency in the way Boretta does business.

Boretta's approach has paid off, resulting in an impressive list of completed projects and an equally impressive list of current activities.

Among the landmark projects Boretta can lay claim to are the Royal Winnipeg Ballet Housing complex (\$1.9 million), Prairie

Housing Conversion (\$9 million), Armadale Hollows Apartments (\$9 million), College Pierre Elliot Trudeau (\$3,2 million) and Heritage West Apartments (\$5 million).

One of the more notable projects Fast recalls was the construction of The Crossways In Common church project on Broadway. With the original Young United Church destroyed by fire, the challenge was to use a remaining tower—all that was left of the historic church—and incorporate it into the new structure. The project was completed at a cost of \$3.8 million and today serves as an important community-gathering place along West Broadway.

Crocus Village Apartments in Winkler was another significant project for the company. The nine-storey project was completed at a cost of \$7.5 million. Donwood Manor Personal Care Home in Winnipeg is another project that has importance for Fast—a \$7 million development that was completed over a two-year period because of their unusual challenges and innovative solutions. These are some of the projects that stand out.

The company has made an impressive name for itself in the construction of seniors residences, both in Winnipeg and throughout the province. Winnipeg projects include: Bethania Haus for Seniors (\$3.5 million); Park City Meadows (\$7.9 million); St. James Lions Estates Housing (\$5.8 million); Agape Villa Seniors Housing (\$7 million) and Golden West Centennial Lodge (\$4.7 million), to name a few.

Further a field, Boretta has built seniors residences in Gimli (Bethel Home, \$6.7 million), Oakbank (Health Centre and Personal

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Care Home, \$5.4 million), Fisher Branch (Personal Care Home, \$3.2 million), Steinbach (Resthaven Manor, \$4.3 million) and Morden (Elks Park Place, \$1.9 million) and Kenora (Southward Villa, \$2.6 million), among others.

Boretta is making an equally significant name for itself in hospital construction including an \$11 million project at Gimli Memorial Health Centre, which involves a new addition and renovations. In addition, the company also has won the contract to complete a \$5.2 million building addition and renovation at the Food Development Centre in Portage la Prairie.

With his own training in building technology, combined with his years of experience, Fast continues to marvel at the changes in the industry over the years. Designs are getting better and building products are improving in energy efficiency and other ways making it easier to create the perfect building.

But given the highly competitive nature of the industry Boretta has adapted to these changes in construction, offering their clients "the best bang for the buck."

What does Fast envision for Boretta's future? "Staying the course and remaining a medium-sized company, but at the same time continuing to reach for the stars and keep growing."

"I want to see the company grow a little, but I want to keep the same principles in place," he says. Expanding into other provinces is a possibility. Diversifying is another option, but keeping the tight knit family atmosphere of the company is a given.

"It's important to give everyone the opportunity to earn a comfortable living. We are all in it together. The idea is to move forward, but not at the expense of others, or our principles."

If there's any question about Boretta's future, consider the story behind the company name. When Fast's father and partners were submitting names for their new company, only to be declined a number of times, the name Boretta was suggested to them.

It turns out that the name Boretta has an interesting place in history, as being one of the options, along with Canada, that the country's forefathers were considering. Just as Canada has gained a healthy reputation around the world, Boretta has worked to earn respect in the construction industry. ■