



Victoria, Australia

Project Spotlight: April 2010



LOCATION

Private Home, Victoria, Australia

STRUCTURE CONTRACTOR

Complete Home Improvement
Malvern East VIC 3145, Australia

LATICRETE SUPPLIER

Tilenet, Smithfield NSW, Australia

TILE & DIGITAL IMAGING SUPPLIER

Reviglass
20496 Bidania (Guipuzkoa) Spain

TILE INSTALLER

Alan Wall, Victoria, Australia

TILE INSTALLATION SYSTEM:

LATICRETE International Inc., Bethany, CT



LATICRETE Products Offer Australian Family a New Outlook

By Eric Carson

While ceramic, porcelain and glass tiles continue to rise in popularity as the hard surface finishes of choice, architects, designers and even creative homeowners continually seem to find more and more unique ways and places to install them.

Consider one homeowner in Victoria, Australia, living among the tightly clustered southeastern towns of the Otways along Great Ocean Road as it hugs the Southern Ocean coastline. Known as one of the more scenic venues the world has to offer, the region is anchored by the lush, temperate rainforest of Great Otway National Park. Given the circumstances, it's easy to see how one could be spoiled with this everyday backdrop panorama, which is precisely the reason this family became inspired to change the unsightly view outside their backyard window.

Surrounded by all this natural beauty the family decided to improve upon the view in the backyard of their neighbor's workshop. The solution showcased one clever way to use tile and two innovative products manufactured by LATICRETE®, a global leader in the research and development of materials and methods for the installation of tile and stone.

To begin with, the homeowner grabbed a camera and headed out into the 255,000 acres (103,000 hectares) of Great Otway National Park to steal a snapshot and bring it home to the backyard.

The idea, to build some form of structure and superimpose the scene in place of the old workshop view, was certainly complicated by the exterior setting and all of the elements that come along with it. The decision turned out to be quite suitable, employ the digital imaging transfer technology of Reviglass in Spain to create a mosaic glass mural of the photograph and then install it as the veneer of a sturdy wood structure with LATICRETE adhesives and grout.

From an installation standpoint, most contractors would select a multipurpose latex-fortified portland cement adhesive, which would be perfectly capable of successfully installing the mosaic glass sheets. But Allan Wall, a third-generation tile setter and now a LATICRETE representative in Victoria, hatched a different plan. Wall, faced with a tight weekend schedule and the powerful Australian sun above, made the decision to use LATAPOXY® 310 Stone Adhesive and the LATAPOXY 310 Cordless Mixer, instead of the thin-set method of veneer installation.

LATAPOXY 310 Stone Adhesive is a two-component, high strength construction epoxy adhesive prized for the time and labor-saving benefits it provides over the traditional mechanical anchor method for spot bonding large format tile or stone on vertical surfaces. The product has a long list of impressive attributes including its incredible shear bond

strength of over 950 psi (6.5 MPa) and its non-sag consistency to name a few.

“This was truly a high-profile project, so it made sense to use the best installation materials on the market,” Wall said. “LATAPOXY® 310 Stone Adhesive is the fastest, easiest material to use. The product mixes itself in the cordless gun and its open time in direct sunlight far surpasses other adhesives. It held the mosaics easily without slipping and we were able to go back and make adjustments to ensure the project came out perfect.”

The mosaic glass mural created with Reviglass Master Digital Printing technology arrived in sections of 1 meter (10.76 square feet) and were labeled or numbered by section to match a printout provided of the finished design. Wall then applied LATAPOXY 310 Stone Adhesive with the cordless mixer, spread the adhesive around with a v-notched trowel and then beat each paper-faced sheet of the glass mural firmly into place. Using LATAPOXY 310 Stone Adhesive the mural sections went up quickly and easily. Wall installed all 10 m² (107 square feet) in less than three hours.

To grout the new view for his Australian family client, Wall needed a high-strength product that could withstand heat, moisture, the possibility of movement, and one that would eliminate the threat of staining in the grout joint. He decided LATICRETE® SpectraLOCK® PRO Grout* was the ideal product to meet his requirements. LATICRETE SpectraLOCK PRO Grout is a high-performance epoxy grout that offers unmatched color uniformity, durability

and stain resistance with extraordinary ease of use. LATICRETE SpectraLOCK PRO Grout contains Microban® antimicrobial protection to inhibit the growth of stain-causing mold and mildew in the grout joint. The product is designed to be non-sag which was appropriate for the vertical installation, and Wall benefited from the long open time provided by LATICRETE SpectraLOCK PRO Grout (80 minutes). With the ease of use and quick cleaning process provided by this patented grout product, Wall remarkably completed the entire grouting process in just 90 minutes.

“LATICRETE SpectraLOCK PRO Grout has 40 different colors to choose from, and we ended up selecting five to create an uninterrupted design,” said Wall. “It’s as easy to install as a similar cement-based grout, but is far easier to clean when exposed to direct sunlight. Cement-based grouts will dry very fast on the surface of the tiles, but stay wet inside the grout joint which it makes it difficult to clean.”

There is no question that custom tile murals enhance architectural features both inside and outside of buildings. But, according to many who have seen it firsthand, this mosaic glass mural could be the first of its kind.

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