

2011 February Christchurch Earthquake

Grief and devastation on everyone's faces for the second time. Slabs of concrete littering the ground. People screaming over the of ear piercing alarms. Good morning/afternoon ladies and gentleman, boys and girls today I am going to talk to you about the 2011 February Christchurch Earthquake.

I can clearly remember the dreadful afternoon of February 22nd. I was in the cloakroom of Room 4 when I heard a rattling, then everything around me started to shake violently. I thought it wasn't a major tremor maybe a magnitude 3, how wrong I was. I was listening to the bus radio and the reporters said that there had been a magnitude 6.3 earthquake at a depth of 5km in Christchurch. At home, Mum and Dad were watching the One News Special. The presenters showed pictures of the Cathedral Square, the PGC and the CTV buildings all with serious damage. I was shocked at what damage had taken place, it looked like everything had been picked up, shaken in a cup and dropped over what we had called Christchurch. At home I could see the devastation from the comfort of my living room, but in Christchurch it was completely different.

One man that was heavily involved in the emergency management was Mayor Bob Parker, as head of the council he tirelessly worked and became the face of the city despite his own injuries and family concerns.

New Zealand police requested 300 Australian police bringing the total of officers in Christchurch to 1200. The police supported search and rescue teams, organised media briefings and talked to families. A team of Urban Search and Rescue specialists from Australia, as well as three sniffer dogs were sent to Christchurch by a Hercules, arriving 12 hours after the quake. Japan, USA, China and Taiwan also sent Search and rescue teams.

The Christchurch earthquake has not just been a national disaster, it has affected the whole world including citizens from 13 different countries. In total there were 181 deaths and 2000 injuries, 164 of them serious.

In September I can remember the cracked roads, chimneys down, water trucks, sand bags and portaloos littering the street. I remember going for a tram ride and stopping at the Cathedral, it used to stand proud and tall but now all that is left is half the Cathedral. It has all changed.

Peoples lives came to a halt, jobs were lost, families broken. Life was never going to be the same. Sport in Christchurch has come to a halt as well. The AMI Stadium, host to 5 pool matches for the Rugby World Cup, hotels and training grounds suffered. Many activities that had to be cancelled or postponed and the list keeps on going today.

The people of Christchurch continue to have a huge job ahead of them rebuilding, not only buildings, but their lives. I would like us now you the audience to observe 5 seconds silience for the people in Christchurch and help them to get through this tough time..... Thank you, I hope you enjoyed my speech.