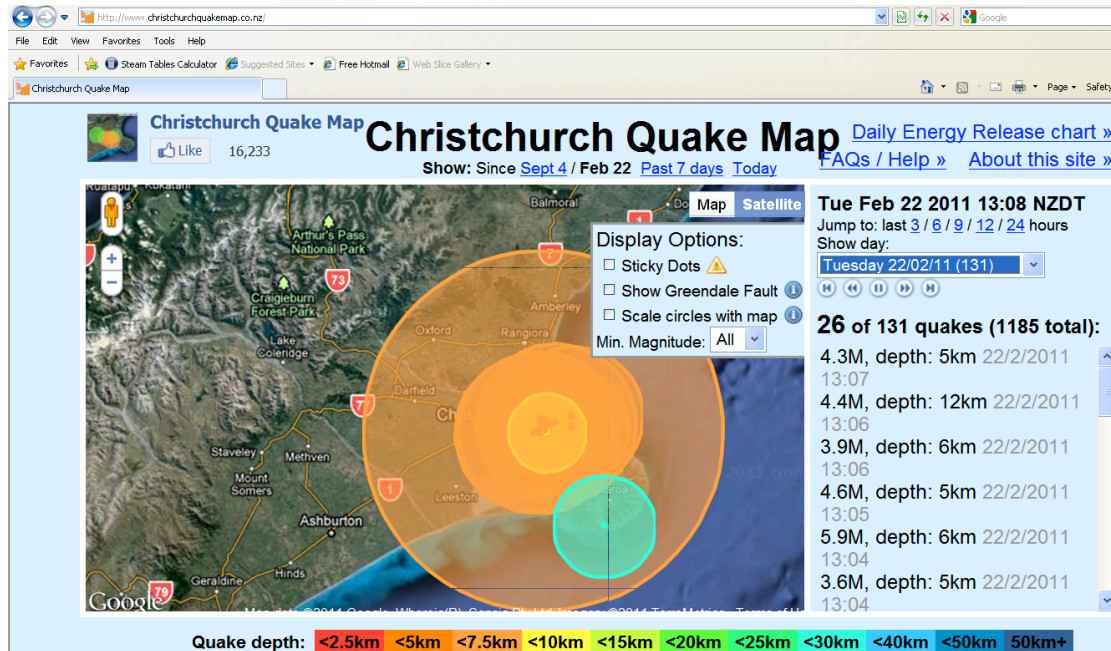


Christchurch-based Members of NZGA

Since the last newsletter, we have had the devastating earthquake aftershock in Christchurch on 22 February 2011. Nine of our 320 members are based in Christchurch, while two others left Christchurch just prior to the quake. They are from small consultancies, software developers, equipment suppliers, Meridian Energy and the University of Canterbury.



I am relieved to learn that most of our members and their families are safe and well, with only one injury at home reported. Most members' homes have suffered minor damage, and possessions, stock and office equipment were thrown about in the quake. Kevin Brown clung to his desk while microscopes and other equipment toppled around him and windows shattered in his Port Hills home/office. He stepped outside to see the '9/11 cloud' rise above the Christchurch CBD and knew things would be bad. His home is still liveable, he did not win the 'best long drop' competition, services have been progressively restored, but he has a lot of restoration work of his own to do – again. People have been shaken in many ways but are now finding ways of operating as best they can. With two degrees of separation in Christchurch, everyone knows someone who knows someone who was badly injured or killed in the quake. Communities have been disrupted with some former neighbours leaving at least temporarily.

Many are working from their own homes. ARANZ moved office after the first quake in September, but unfortunately to what is now the 'Red Zone', so have just moved again into a new office on 1 April. They have proceeded with training and software development. Elliott-Scott had stock and records tossed about, but have been able to repack and refile with minimal loss and get back to business. In Meridian's case they had several offices, though their Manchester St office is no more, so they have been shuffling staff between operating offices, while some individuals work from home – new office space will be available in May. The University of Canterbury has been damaged, including at Ilam, so lectures and research have been disrupted. Some lectures are proceeding in tents located 30km from campus, even though lecturers have not been able to access their own offices for notes - some students have transferred to other universities.

I have now spoken with most of our Christchurch members, and while they all have some terrible "moment it happened" stories, there is also a certain amount of bravado mixed with real toughening and definitely a keenness to get on with things. Our thoughts are with them.

Brian White
Executive Officer
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