

# In the mix



**MASONS MORTAR**  
preserving the past, present & future of our built heritage

Newsletter issue 1 Summer 2009



## Practical training courses tailored to suit you!

In January of this year we launched our one-day training courses at the Merryhill training facility in Charlestown, Fife.

### Courses on offer

#### One-day courses:

- Re-pointing with lime mortars
- Mechanical application of lime renders
- Surface repair using Lithomex
- Lime plastering
- Rendering with style: flat render, spraying & hand casting

#### Half-day courses:

- Applying burnt sand mastic
- Ashlar mortars

These courses have been well attended and have proved very popular, so much so that for 2010 we are offering four new courses to compliment our existing training programme.

Our lead instructor Douglas Johnston (LICW), has over 40 years experience in the industry and can tailor course content to suit novice and building professional alike.

*"When you are spending good money on materials and tools for the repair of your building or client's property, it makes sense to invest in a one-day intensive training course. It helped me achieve a high standard of work and I'll be able to use these skills in future projects"*

(William Gemmell, Falkirk. Attended our Re-pointing course in May)

These great value training courses run all year round in a purpose-built indoor training centre, prices from £95.00 + VAT (includes a buffet lunch & refreshments). The centre is easily accessible from Edinburgh, the Lothians and Fife with ample on-site parking.

All of our course dates can be viewed and booked online at [www.masons-mortarshop.com](http://www.masons-mortarshop.com) alternatively, please call us on 0131 555 0503 to reserve your place now!



### Training & re-training for the skills needed today . . .

Masons Mortar is proud to announce the introduction of The Master Stroke DVD Tutorial series. This comprises 4 new high quality DVDs that are essential viewing for everyone involved in the building process:

Builders, Architects, Surveyors, Specialist Trades people, Conservation Officers, Engineers, Homeowners and Procurement Managers.

The content is wide-ranging and comprehensive, with a focus on best practice. Each feature presentation offers useful, practical advice on how to use lime-based materials properly to achieve great results.

This tutorial series covers the following topics:

- Making lime mortars
- Applying lime renders
- Applying lime plasters
- Building & pointing with lime

Offered at an introductory price of £29.99 + VAT per DVD.

Order your DVDs today at: [www.masons-mortarshop.com](http://www.masons-mortarshop.com)

Or call our order line on 0131 555 0503



## Quality masons tools now in stock at Masons Mortar

Masons chisels have virtually disappeared from the tool suppliers across the country, making sourcing a nightmare for the great majority of tradespeople and enthusiastic builders alike.

Apart from our fabulous range of chisels for every function, we now hold in stock a wide range of specialist rendering and stone repair tools that will save you time and money and improve the quality and speed of work. Along side these tools we stock a comprehensive range of CO.ME tools, with over 100 types of trowels, pointing keys, brick jointers and floats.



# Quality in colour

Colour is one of the most important aspects of building materials today. Correct matching of materials when they are being used for repair is vital.

Masons Mortar Ltd has developed a very accurate and reliable colour matching service for mortars, renders and repair materials, by combining cutting edge technology and skilled technicians.

After years of investment and development, our unique predictive colour matching service has seen our customers return job after job, knowing that we are taking the strain of matching away from the applicator, which has been our aim from the outset.

Samples are sent to our colour laboratory where our colour technician processes customer samples using the most advanced equipment available. Masons Mortar customers have this service at their disposal to meet their colour matching requirements.

## Competition corner

It's always nice when you get asked a question that's a bit tricky and you know the answer! So to that end, we are going to pose a 'difficult' question in every issue of our newsletter and all you need to do is get in touch with your answer... it's that simple.

All the correct answers will go into a draw and we will select a winner at random. This competition is not just for pride; we have prizes to give away to the first three winning entries drawn!

**1st Prize** - Free place on one of our training courses

**2nd Prize** - £25 gift voucher which can be redeemed against any masons mortar product or service

**3rd Prize** - Select a trowel of your choice from our wide selection of CO.ME tools

So here is the question...

*St Astier manufactures a range of high quality natural hydraulic limes, but how long have they been producing these materials for?*

Please send your entries into us at: [competition@masonsmortar.co.uk](mailto:competition@masonsmortar.co.uk)

All entries must be received by 30th September 2009. Prize winners will be announced in our next issue.

You can offer your clients this additional level of service to ensure the reputation of your business is enhanced. Happy customers are always the very best advertisement for future work. There is absolutely no reason whatsoever why the colour of a repair, render or lime paint should not be exactly to your clients requirements.

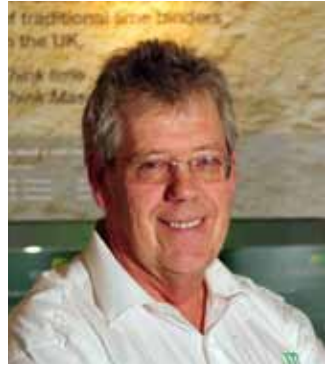
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*No matter how well executed a repair is, if the colour is wrong no one will appreciate the effort that went into it in the first place.*

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With over 3,000 colour matches on our electronic database, we have the experience and the capability to produce very accurate matches and to re-produce previously ordered materials to an exacting standard. Masons Mortar is committed to quality control in all aspects of material testing and production and is a registered ISO 9001 company.

## Top 5 tips



In this segment we want to offer a few handy pointers in terms of good principles and techniques to adopt when approaching your work. In this issue we are going to cover some hints & tips to assist you when you are doing re-pointing work with lime mortars.

1. Joints must be raked out clean with all traces of mortar removed from the stone and the back of the joints squared, ready to take the new mortar.
2. Re-pointing is a bottom up top down process, always wet the wall from the base to the top before washing out the joints, this avoids staining on the stone as the old limey mortar will run down a wet wall.
3. Re-pointing is generally a filling and finishing process. Make sure the joints are adequately filled and that after the mortar has stiffened – will not yield to finger pressure but can be indented with your finger nail. Then compact the mortar back with a churn brush.
4. Keep mortar damp, not wet for the first 72 hours, it must not dry out. Hydraulic materials need to stay damp to allow full hydration, after that they can be allowed to dry out naturally.
5. Hessian protection is not just for winter working, please protect your work against strong winds, wind driven rain and long sunny periods where the mortar can dry out too quickly.

**Douglas Johnston**  
Masons Mortar founder

Buy online at:

[www.masonsmortarshop.com](http://www.masonsmortarshop.com)

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