

Like Father, Like Brothers, Like Daughter

Sheree Harkness comes from a family of bricklayers. Her dad Phil and her two brothers, Job and Joel, are bricklayers. (Mum has also helped the family, from time to time, as a labourer). Sheree tried working in a hair dressing salon at one stage, but felt out of place. "I like all the normal girl things but when it comes to working, I like to be outdoors";

"I started my apprenticeship with dad and it just went from there. I did my TAFE training at Wollongong. I didn't receive any special treatment from anyone";

Having finished her apprenticeship last September, she usually works on her own as Dolly Bird Bricklaying but at times she also works for her dad. She has been working on a job in the Southern Highlands and one day, with the help of a young, work experience female, laid 450 blocks in a day.

"You feel like you have really achieved something. You can stand back and look at what you have completed at the end of the day and see your work. I have a sort of competition with myself, where I might set myself a particular target to achieve the next day";

Sheree has helped with ABBTF Step Out Programs. She sees the work of the ABBTF as an excellent way to promote the trade and help to recruit apprentices to replace older bricklayers, who will retire in the next few years.

Would she encourage more women bricklayers? "Certainly, it would give me some more competition and if you like the outdoors and a trade where you can take pride in your work, go for it!";