



## *Those Amazing Builders*

### **Glossary of Words and Terms**

**Aesthetics:** Dealing with the nature of art, beauty, and taste, and with the creation and appreciation of beauty.

**Autonomous:** Acting independently or having the freedom to do so.

**Bore hole:** A narrow shaft bored in the ground for the extraction of water or other liquid, as part of a geotechnical investigation, or as a pilot hole for installing piers or underground utilities.

**Biometrics:** Refers to the identification of humans by characteristics such as voice or hand print for access control to a facility.

**Biovestibule:** Separations between the administrative areas and laboratory areas.

**Cat 6A cable:** (category 6A cable) The standard cable for today's high-speed ethernet networks to support high-speed computer applications.

**Composite:** Materials made from two or more materials with significantly different properties that remain separate and distinct within the finished structure.

**Curtain wall:** An outer non-structural covering of a building, such as glass.

**Egress:** Exit.

**Embankment:** An artificial bank raised above the surrounding land to redirect or prevent flooding, or to carry a railroad or road across low-lying land.

**Extensometer:** A device that is used to measure changes in the length of an object.

**Façade:** An exterior side of a building, usually the front.

**Forensics:** Investigation of the facts surrounding criminal or civil law. Forensic engineering refers to the scientific analysis of structures relating to their failure or damage.

**Framing:** Constructing the skeleton of a building.

**Flyover bridge:** A highway overpass.

**Grout:** A mortar or paste for filling crevices, especially the gaps between bricks or tiles.

**Inclinometer:** A device that can measure an angle with respect to a level surface.

**Infrastructure:** The basic physical structures needed for the operation of a society, such as transportation and power facilities.

**Just-in-time supply chain (or delivery):** A production strategy designed to reduce inventory and associated costs by having supplies arrive just before they are needed.

**Laminated glass:** Safety glass that holds together when shattered.

**Levee:** A natural or artificial dike or embankment that runs parallel to a river and prevents water from overflowing its banks.

**Maglev (magnetic levitation):** A system of transportation in which vehicles travel by magnets that lift them a short distance above a guideway and propel them forward.

**Mentor:** A trusted counselor or guide who helps a younger person advance in his or her career.

**Mortar:** A paste used to bind masonry blocks together and fill the gaps between them to form a rigid structure.

**Plumb bob:** A weight suspended from a string and used as a vertical reference line.

**Plate girder bridge:** A bridge supported by plate girders, made out of flat steel sections that are welded into an I-beam shape. The girders are placed on foundation piers, and a bridge deck is built on top of the girders to carry traffic.

**Repointing:** The process of refreshing the visible mortar between bricks or other masonry blocks.

**Prefab housing:** Housing manufactured off-site in advance, usually in standard sections that can be easily shipped and assembled.

**Retrofit:** The application of new technology or features to older systems, as in increasing a home's energy efficiency by installing a new boiler.

**Scale model:** A smaller version of a building that maintains its proportions and physical characteristics. Often used as a guide to making the building in full size.

**Seismograph:** An instrument used to detect and record earthquakes.

**Sustainable:** Using a resource so that it is not depleted.

**Tempered glass:** A type of safety glass processed by controlled thermal or chemical treatments to increase its strength compared with normal glass. Tempered glass, when broken, crumbles into small pieces that are less likely to cause injury than the sharp shards of regular glass.

**Thermoplastic:** Substances that become plastic on heating and harden on cooling, and are able to repeat these processes. Also refers to a recycled plastic that has recently been used in bridges.

**Tolerances:** In engineering, the allowable limit of variation in a physical dimension.

**Venue:** A physical place, such as the location of a business.

**Wind farm:** A group of wind turbines in the same location used to produce electric power.



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