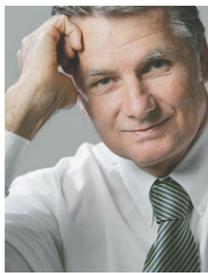




SELECT speak

THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

It's hard to ignore the amazing talent pool living on the Coast



By **ERLE LEVEY**

THERE is something about Noosa that encourages excellence. I don't know whether it's the climate, the environment or the topography of the place. It seems to bring out the best in

people. That quest for success has been met with recognition on many levels in business, the arts and in the sporting arena.

Our architects and building designers have been acknowledged on the national stage. It's the same with our tradespeople.

On a Friday night in Canberra in late November the spotlight was cast on Noosa again with Mick and Sally Devlin's company Braeden Constructions winning National Residential Builder of the Year for Masters Builders Australia.

Not only that, Braeden Constructions was awarded the big one at the end of the night ... National Residential Builder of the Year. It is the first time a Sunshine Coast builder has been recognised with such an honour.

It just backs up what I have come to believe after judging building and design awards on the Sunshine Coast for more than a dozen years, that the region has some of the most interesting and quality built homes in Australia.

The award-winning home sits on 16ha in the Noosa hinterland. A pavilion style modern Queenslander with dramatic north-easterly views to the North Shore and beyond.

Yet what makes it even more special is the fact it was constructed by a Noosa builder using Noosa designers, Noosa engineers, Noosa contractors and Noosa suppliers.

The award is judged on value for money, workmanship, design and technical difficulty. And there were plenty of issues to work through on a project of such a size.

Mick Devlin had his share of issues to overcome on the project, including six weeks of rain. There were also the challenges due to

the rocky site and not knowing what would be encountered.

Stonework from the 16ha site has been utilised in the construction of the home. So has timber milled 120 years ago from Fraser Island that was used on the Cairns Wharf and has now made its way back to the region.

Having 16 different roof sections on the house meant Mick also learnt about the need for flexibility in building, just like in business.

He did this by maintaining good interaction with the owners, who were keenly involved in the process from site selection to design and right up to completion.

It was an evolving house design process and Mick found it vital to keep in contact with the engineers.

Having a background in commercial building as well as residential homes he was not phased by the the amount of civil construction.

In reality, Mick was managing the project as well as building it.

"It was complicated," he admitted. "I learnt a lot in the process."

"I had already done one house for the clients so if I was doing something wrong they would tell me.

"The key is not to panic or over-react." The six-bedroom home is fully automated, using Dynalight technology installed by local company Ingenious. As such, it can be controlled from anywhere in the house and completely closed down with just the flick of a switch.

It comes with media room and rumpus and is designed around a level-edge pool to the north as well as a variety of terraces.

There are lots of little areas so you can be either in the sun or out of the weather. And the house has the flexibility so that it can accommodate children, business and guests.

The kitchen area has control of the house and entertaining with a variety of eating areas opening off it and out on to the decks.

As Mick Devlin said, it doesn't seem that long ago that he first drove up a rough cow paddock looking for a couple of pegs marking out the position of this new home.

"The house was challenging and rewarding to build. It's nice to come back and see it now; not as a building project, but as a family home being lived in and enjoyed."



FIRST CLASS list

A well-loved complex at Sunshine Beach proves it's worth with this incredible penthouse. Long regarded as one of the most well positioned apartment complexes on Sunshine Beach, the vintage apartment building has classic curved balconies to give an early ocean liner approach to the deep blue waters of the ocean.

Unobstructed views down the valley of the first line of dunes off the beach are broken

only by white-capped waves meeting the sandy shoreline.

Constructed in the late '70s and early '80s at a time when concrete construction reigned supreme, the building underwent a complete facelift over the past few years.

The process of fresh render new balustrades and a complete upgrade of facilities have certainly raised the flag on this small complex. Page 28.

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Live in peace in this brilliant architecturally designed home



42: GOLDEN PERFORMANCE

Coast builder wins prestigious Master Builders award



45: AUCTION ACTION

The bidders head up Noosa Hill, but the bids continue after the auction



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