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A whale of a build

Sunrise project wins house of year

By **PETER GARDINER**

Whales are not a usual workplace health and safety issue.

But for Mick Devlin, when working on the \$2.4 million Master Builders Association Sunshine Coast house of the year they just went with the drop-dead gorgeous territory.

Mick, who runs Braeden Constructions, said watching the whales go by was one of the pleasant distractions in what was a challenging but ultimately rewarding build.

When your building lot is the old Sunrise Beach caravan park, where the beach is your doorstep, Mick could hardly help but do the odd bit of whale spotting.

However, that did not affect the skilled workmanship of Mick and his mostly local building team, as you don't win the over \$2 million MBA award by taking your eyes off the ball.

Of course, that price tag does not include the land component, with this absolute beachfront costing at least \$5 million-plus.

"What I loved about this build is that it was a really local effort – it was built for the Ferris family," Mick said.

"I'd have to say the owners played a big part in the overall outcome by

making some very good suggestions."

"It was designed by Ben Thornton of SBT Design at Doonan, and the SCG Engineers are local, and I tried to use local sub-contractors as much as possible.

"I think a lot of the luxury homes you see around the place are designed by architects in Sydney and Melbourne who have no real feel for the local area."

He said as soon as you walked in the door, the whole house just flowed through to the ocean.

Mick said building right on the beach meant having to design with the rugged elements, including the moist salt air.

Apart from plenty of glass, the materials used have tough glazed surfaces and copper is used in areas like the downpipes.

Tough spotted Queensland gum hardwood is another amazing feature.

"Instead of looking neglected and in need of repair in five years, this will take on genuine character."

Features of the four-bedroom modern minimalist house with the classic Queensland feel are a reflection pond at the entrance and a wet edge pool on the first floor, with bedrooms underneath opening to the lawn, which flows to the sand.

The use of Perspex walls there allows the light to penetrate into the rear of the home that features a yoga room and a cellar.



This award-winning home built by Mick Devlin, pictured inset, utilises its position to the maximum while allowing for the rugged environment by using the right building materials.

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED




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It's no accident that Di wins – it's by design

Acclaimed Noosaville interior designer Di Henshall is used to winning awards for her work.

But taking out the Women in Building category at the Master Builders Association Sunshine Coast awards at the Novotel Twin Waters Resort was extra special.

It carried added significance because she is a woman in a male-dominated industry and obtaining her builder's licence was "one of the hardest things I've ever done in my life".

"To be acknowledged by the Master Builders as being a significant part of the industry is a wonderful shot in the arm and it's a great inspiration and encouragement for me to keep going," Mrs Henshall said.

She started Di Henshall Interior Design – which does



Di Henshall.

PHOTO: DARRYN SMITH/N23279B

jobs nationwide – at Noosaville 21 years ago and has seen it grow to an operation employing 10 staff and generating millions in revenue annually.

As part of the business, she undertakes building projects such as major renovations.

And despite the major impact the global economic downturn has had on the building industry on the Coast, she has continued to thrive.

"Luckily, because we're so diverse in our scope of services, we have not faltered as far as our workload is concerned," she said.

"Some projects have been delayed, but at this point none of them have been cancelled."

Mrs Henshall puts her success in tough times down to making sensible adjustments based on the prevailing climate.

"We're constantly busy," she said. "We have about 30 projects on at once at any one time."