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2025 MBV EXCELLENCE IN HOUSING AWARDS PAGE 08

HONOURING VICTORIA'S
TOP BUILDERS

A LEGACY BUILT TO LAST
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A Legacy Built to Last:

Master Builders Victoria Celebrates 150 Years

One hundred and fifty years is a long time, but legacy was never measured in years. It was measured in what still stood, and what still held.

Among Australia's most influential industry bodies, Master Builders Victoria (MBV) has long stood as a proud guardian of that legacy. Founded in 1875, in an era of transformation and ambition, MBV was born to support and strengthen Victoria's building and construction industry, a mission that endured steadfastly through generations and continued to lead a future-ready industry toward a better, more sustainable world.

The Celebration

On Friday 14 November 2025, the Victorian building community came together beneath the grand arches of the Victoria Pavilion at Melbourne Showgrounds to mark this extraordinary milestone, 150 years of craftsmanship, community, and progress.

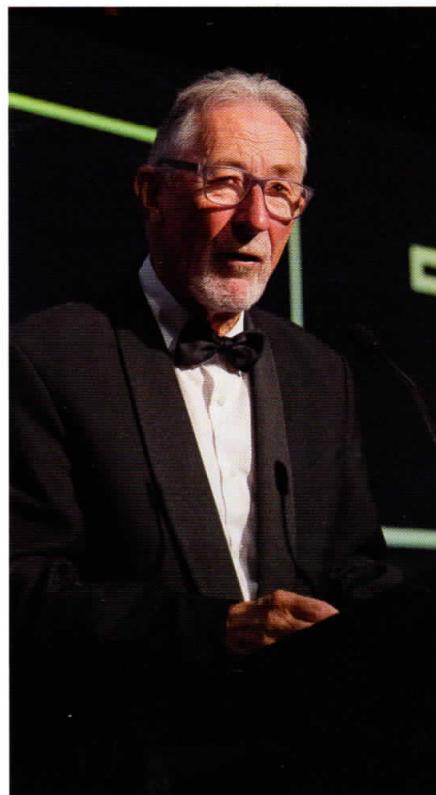
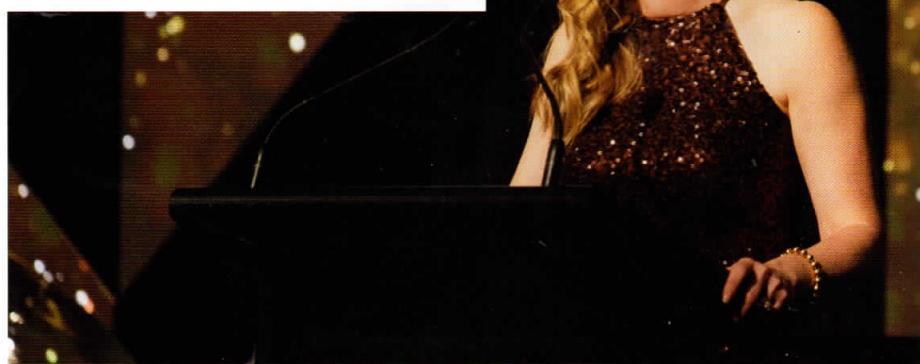
The celebration opened with pre-dinner drinks and a three-course dinner, where guests were invited to journey through the organisation's remarkable history. On arrival, guests were interviewed on the red carpet by Channel 10's Jayde Cotic, who captured their fondest MBV memories and reflections on what had made them proud members throughout the years.

Stories of mentorship, innovation, and enduring camaraderie echoed through every conversation, painting a heartfelt portrait of a community built on shared purpose and passion.

Australian broadcasting icon Peter Hitchener OAM then guided the evening with his trademark warmth and wit, weaving together stories, tributes, and memories that reflected the spirit

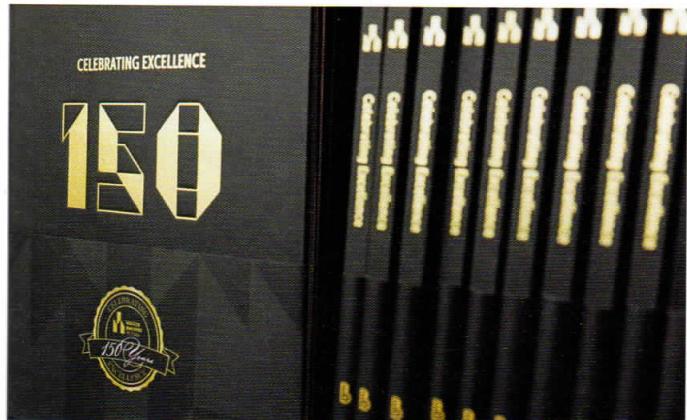
of an industry and an institution built to last.

MBV CEO Michaela Lihou began the evening with a heartfelt welcome, reminding guests that the night was not only a tribute to the past but also a call to the future, to face new challenges with the same resolve that had defined MBV since its earliest days.

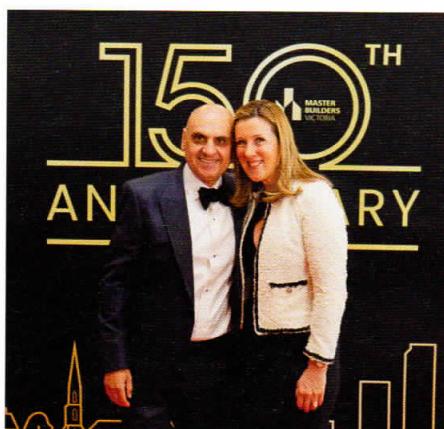


Former MBV CEO Brian Welch delivered the keynote address, reflecting on the organisation's evolution through decades of change, while MBV President Geoff Purcell offered words of gratitude to the members, partners, and industry leaders who had carried MBV's mission forward.

A highlight of the evening was the official launch of the commemorative coffee table book, *Celebrating Excellence – 150 Years of MBV*, a beautifully curated reflection on the organisation's achievements and enduring impact.



Guests were also moved by a special Life Members and Past Presidents' Acknowledgement, led by a distinguished panel including Nick Wootten, Don Ravida, Mark Little, Melanie Fasham, and David Newnham, all of whom shared in the honour of having shaped MBV's proud legacy.

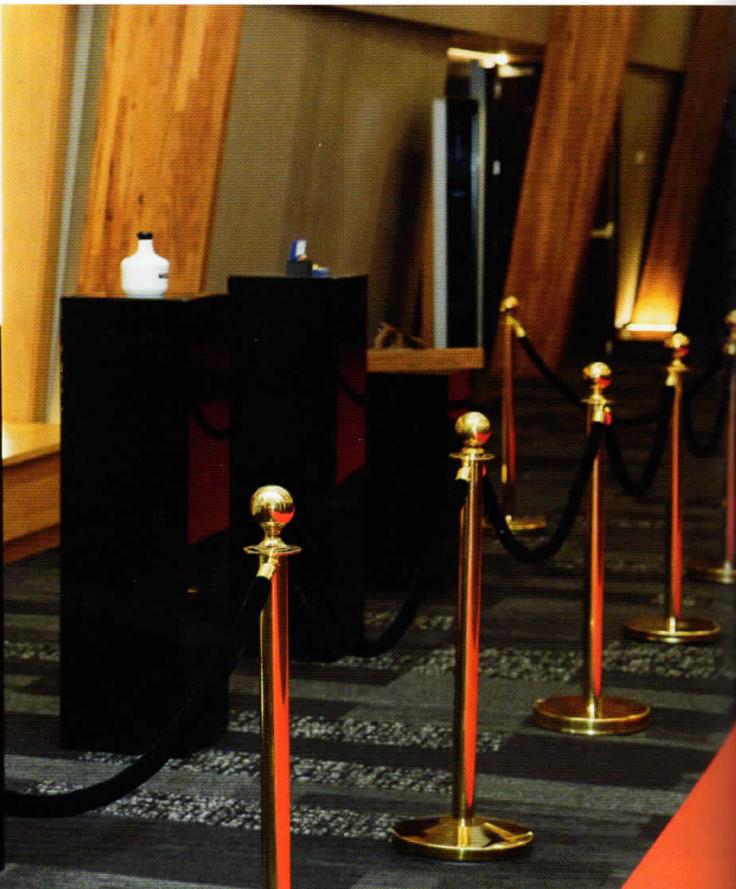


Presentations and archival videos offered nostalgic glimpses into the organisation's early years, capturing the essence of builders, craftspeople, and leaders who helped raise both skylines and standards across Victoria. Exclusive interviews with past presidents, life members, and long-standing members wove together a living history, a collective memoir of resilience, innovation, and unity.



As the evening drew on, the music of The Bamboos filled the Pavilion, lifting spirits and bringing the celebration to life, a fitting soundtrack for a story still being built.

For 150 years, Master Builders Victoria had built more than structures; it had built a community, a culture, and a commitment to excellence. And though the night was steeped in nostalgia, its message was clear: the legacy continued, strong, enduring, and ever looking forward.





**The legacy continued,
strong, enduring, and
ever looking forward.**

At the Heart of the Story: A Conversation with Michaela Lihou

Just before the celebrations began, Channel 10's Jayde Cotic caught up with MBV CEO Michaela Lihou for a quick chat about MBV's legacy, its people, and the future of the industry. With guests gathering and the night about to unfold, their conversation set the perfect tone for the milestone ahead.

Jayde: Michaela, 150 years is a massive milestone. When you look back at that history, what does it feel like to be leading MBV right now?

Michaela: It honestly feels like stepping into a story that started long before us and knowing you're helping carry it forward. There's pride, there's gratitude, and there's this spark that keeps you pushing for the future.

Jayde: Tonight, so many members talked about what MBV has meant to them. From your perspective, what makes this community so special?

Michaela: It's the spirit. Builders are practical, but they're also deeply connected. They've built together, learned together, and backed each

other for generations. That quiet respect between them is what holds this community strong.

Jayde: Being close to so many MBV events over the years, I've seen how much MBV champions apprentices. What role do you play in supporting them?

Michaela: We're really proud of the platform we give them. Through our Apprentice of the Year Awards, we connect them with employers, mentors, and knowledge sharing. We shine a light on their talent, access to resources that reinforce their skills, and help open doors. Watching them find their place in the industry is incredibly rewarding.

Jayde: And those awards don't stop there. You also run the Excellence in Construction Awards and Excellence in Housing Awards. Why are these such highlights?

Michaela: Because they bring everyone together. Builders and apprentices from regional Victoria and metro Melbourne all in one room, celebrating the best in the state. Every year is wonderful.

You see this spirit so clearly at our Excellence in Building and Construction Awards. Competitors by trade, yet united on the night. Every applause is a nod of respect, a shared pride in building Victoria, together.

Jayde: With such a big milestone tonight, what do you hope people take away?

Michaela: I hope they feel proud of what they've built and hopeful for what's ahead. If the next 150 years carry the same heart and grit as the last, our future is in very good hands.



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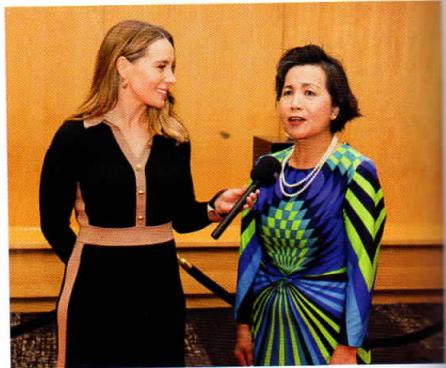
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150 YEARS



Relive your favourite moments from the night through our [event gallery](#)

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CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE

150 Years of MBV

Celebrate 150 years of Master Builders Victoria with this beautifully crafted commemorative coffee table book – a journey through the people, projects and pivotal moments that helped shape Victoria's building and construction industry.



You built the pages, chapter by chapter. Now take home a piece of history and display it with pride.

Scan the QR code to purchase your copy today!

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE

150

