

Media Release

Online revolution for South West building awards

Embargoed until 11pm, June 25, 2020

The coronavirus crisis put a halt to the South West building awards in March but the event has been triumphantly relaunched in a new, online format.

The tickets were sold, the trophies polished and new outfits hanging ready to be worn for the Master Builders-Bankwest Building Excellence Awards when gatherings were banned just days ahead of the gala affair on March 21.

Three months on, the event has been reimagined as the first Master Builders online awards ceremony. Instead of the original plan for a celebration in Bunbury, builders logged on from home towns as far north as Waroona, east to Darkan, looping around to Manjimup and Pemberton then south to Augusta and everywhere between to celebrate the region's best projects.

Awards judge Charlie Baggetta said this year's top South West home was created by Bluewater Building in the desirable Eagle Bay area, featuring the ideal man cave for a pandemic retreat.

"The three-storey home has been built on a north facing block overlooking Geographe Bay, with views from every level and enclosed balconies which can be used all year round," Mr Baggetta said.

"The basement area was a late addition when the owner realised there was a lot of unused space. It's been turned into a beautiful games room and bar area – the perfect man cave.

"Exceptional features which appealed to the judges were the stonework, tiling, cabinetry and external finishes.

"The stonework is introduced externally in features such as flowerbeds and used more extensively indoors. It blends in well with the timber floors throughout the home, which add warmth and soften the effect of the stone.

"It's a house you want to be in."

The best commercial project award went to Pindan for the new, forest-themed Manjimup hospital.

"The first thing visitors see is a timber and steel tree feature in the foyer which is a magnificent entry statement," Mr Baggetta said.

"The forest sense carries through to details such as twigs and leaves imprinted on glass and the use of cheerful but calming colours, especially green.

"It's great to see local character reflected in infrastructure like hospitals in regional locations, rather than standardised facilities.

“Workmanship on the project was good across all trades and the rammed earth external finish was especially impressive.

“Site management was top notch in the face of challenges such as drainage during wet weather in Manjimup and the technical complexities of the construction. All the elements have been brought together harmoniously.

“Pindan should be congratulated for an innovative, high quality and well-organised project incorporating local materials and local trades.”

Master Builders regional manager Geoff Bosustow said the building trend in the South West was towards luxury homes in the Cape Naturaliste to Cape Leeuwin area.

“The South West region was still feeling the effects of the building downturn when coronavirus hit but the top end of the market was starting to move. Now the path is clear for recovery and we look forward to activity picking up,” he said.

“Augusta is growing in popularity for high-end holiday homes. It has a remote quality and a spectacular outlook across the two oceans, with surf breaking over rocky outcrops. You don’t get that in other locations and the availability of land is still good.

“The coastal region around Margaret River, Dunsborough and Eagle Bay continues to be popular but the rugged ocean vistas, calm inlets and undiscovered treasures of Augusta are starting to be revealed. It has a peaceful and relaxing beach vibe.

“The biggest growth area is still the Vasse and Naturaliste area south west of Busselton, which has been going gangbusters.”

Winners of the South West awards will be considered for the 2021 state-wide awards.

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