Double win for local builder

WANGARATTA based construction company Ovens and King Builders are celebrating their success, following their recent wins in two categories at the 2013 Master Builders North East Regional Building Awards. The business won in two categories – Best Renovation/Addition $300,000-$500,000, for renovation work completed in Rose River, and Best Sustainable Energy Home, for a home they constructed in Beechworth.

The Rose River property that was renovated is home to Lindy and Matt Roberts of Rose Valley Pastoral Co. The home in Beechworth is a thermally efficient and sustainably designed home for local clients Meg Warren and Fraser Rowe, which was designed by local building designer Tracey Toohey. The Beechworth home continues to be recognised, having recently been named as a finalist in HIA’s GreenSmart awards, to be presented in Sydney during August.

Lachie Gales, from Ovens and King Builders, said that winning the two awards “means a great deal” to the company. “It is very gratifying to be recognised in multiple categories, and to pick up Best Sustainable Energy Home for a third time really establishes our credentials in that area.” He said he was also proud that the business won the awards amid an especially strong field of competitors.

Mr Gales said their business prides itself on the lasting relationships it has built with its client base over the years, and said that both wins were made even more gratifying because of the fact that the clients were both repeat customers of the company.

“He said the clients at both homes were collaborative and very easy to work with. “We’re pleased that we are able to allow our clients to have the input they want to have,” Mr Gales said.

“Both these jobs benefitted greatly from the client’s vision.” Ovens and King Builders build new homes, renovations and additions and have a broad experience in a wide range of mediums. The business has been recognised in the MBAV awards three times, having also won awards in 2009 and 2011.

More information on Ovens and King Builders’ latest projects can be found at http://www.ovensandkingbuilders.com.au/projects/
Working closely for a strong result

OWNERS Fraser Rowe and Meg Warren are thrilled about their house being a winner at the MBA awards. “It was a team effort,” Mr Rowe said, highlighting the work done by designer Tracey Tooley, as well as Ovens and King Builders. “I think it’s good thing, and hopefully more builders will aim higher towards these types of awards.”

Mr Rowe also praised the professionalism and communication of the business and its staff. Lisa Gale, of Ovens and King Builders, said they had built up a strong client relationship with the pair over the years. “This is the second time we’ve worked with these particular clients to build a custom designed and thermally efficient new home,” Mr Gale said. “The original house had been their home for 15 years and we were pleased to be invited to be part of their next adventure, an invitation that reflects the quality of our relationship all those years ago. “Working with our clients is at once challenging and instructive, as they are very well versed and researched in the principles and processes of construction. “Ultimately, the project was very much a collaborative partnership between client, designer and builder.”

Mr Gale said: “We were involved with the client in the specification of the finishes and fixtures and supplied multiple detailed tenders as we tailored the project cost to their requirements.”

Mr Gale described client communication as a “key strength of our business”. “In this case, the long relationship we have shared made it possible to approach the project in the right way, with a sense of mutual respect and common purpose. “We felt we understood their concept thoroughly and made every effort to execute that vision without compromise. “At times the quality of the construction was challenged, but we were able to work together to return the project to the high standard we were all committed to achieving.”

Winning with sustainability

The home, which won the Best Sustainable Energy Home category, was designed by local building designer Tracey Tooley to cater for their future needs, including access to health services and less demanding property maintenance. There was a strong desire to keep the privacy they had previously enjoyed, as well as the ease of living in a well designed, thermally efficient home.

The end result has been a dwelling with a level of functionality and thermal efficiency that means the clients’ comfort and lifestyle is catered for. The building complements its surrounds and achieves very low levels of energy consumption. Its long list of energy efficient and sustainable design features includes: Solar passive design using northern aspect for best effect. Waffle pod concrete slab with higher insulating value and lower concrete use. Cross flow ventilation – windows and doors on north and south faces allow cross-flow ventilation for cooling with proprietary seals that prevent heat loss when closed. A heat recovery ventilation system that captures the energy in the air inside the house and returns it to the fresh air. Selective use of different window options, all double glazed, mostly timber aluminium composite construction, for cost effective thermal performance. Provision of grid connected photo voltaic panels with battery bank storage. Solar Star roof ventilation system – solar powered roof-mounted devices that generate enough air movement to expel damaging heat and moisture and to maintain a steady flow of beneficial air circulation. The result is properly ventilated roof spaces which prolong roof life, lower cooling costs and make life considerably more comfortable.

Gas boosted Solar Hot Water Service – evacuated tube type for peak efficiency. A high grade single frame supporting the evacuated tubes provides for peak winter efficiency to minimize LPG boosting. Extensive use of plantation grown pine, chosen specifically as a renewable resource that locks up carbon.

Solar Tube sky lights for superior day lighting in kitchen and laundry. 32 amp circuit provided for potential use charging hybrid vehicles; and much more. The well appointed home has a number of enviable features including: a master bedroom, complete with a walk in robe; a large pantry room; entry hall and airlock; and much more.

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**Extensive work at homestead**

LACHIE Gales from Ovens and King Builders said there was an extensive amount of work done on the “Rose Valley” homestead. “The clients had a very clear vision of the style and interior decoration of the house,” Mr Gales said. “We worked determinedly with them to fashion a blend of rustic features against a backdrop of highly finished surfaces…”

Some of the many features of the renovation include:

- **Extensive timber floor framing** that extends the existing floor levels and elevates the outdoor living areas allowing passage to freely flow from inside to outside.
- **Outdoor living area** framed with exposed hardwood rafters and a feature post of recycled hardwood.
- **Complex gum decking** for durability and fire resistance, extending all around the house.
- **Tasmanian oak feature flooring** for a light, warm surface and durability.
- **Extensive roof reconstruction.**
  - Recycled red bricks were sourced for aesthetic feature in the mudroom and the extension of the chimney flue.
  - The external timber cladding used fire resistant species (Messmate), kiln dried and hand painted on both sides. Existing weather boards were recycled in specific panels of wall providing an ongoing link to the original construction. Shaped backing blocks provide a fine detail to the light fittings.
  - Double glazing of kiln dried hardwood windows for cost effective thermal performance with a focus on sympathetic styling to match the existing windows.
  - Cabinets made from low VOC materials and made from natural timbers or plys. No melamine, chipboards or MDF products were used.
  - Galvanised corrugated iron for the aesthetic effect.
  - **Extensive use of plantation grown timber** in the wall frames; and Concrete stamps for longevity and sound structure.

**Praise for outstanding building team**

THE renovation work carried out by Ovens and King Builders on the homestead “Rose Valley” was well received by farm managers Lindy and Matt Roberts. While the property owners live overseas, the couple are long term farm managers, and acted as the clients during the renovation project. Mrs Roberts was full of praise for the work done by the Ovens and King Builders team. “They’re a fantastic team,” she said. She said that as the property is a reasonable distance away from Wangaratta, the workers stayed overnight several times, and there was much teamwork in coordinating work, subcontractors and deliveries. But she said the renovation work went very smoothly, and the crew were also very mindful of safety, with young children living onsite. “We really appreciate the team that Lachie put together - those boys became part of our family. They were a pleasure to be around,” she said. She praised the efforts of the young workers. “For young blokes to achieve what they did is quite remarkable and they should feel very proud of themselves.”

She said the renovation work was a team effort between Ovens and King Builders and other subcontractors. Ovens and King Builders handled the structural work, while Benalla business Beaton Plumbing worked on plumbing, Myrtleford’s Staunchwood Furniture and Woodworks handling the cabinetry, Gary Porter handling electrical work and painter Brad Rumbelow taking care of the majority of the interior painting.

Mrs Roberts said everyone worked very well together. “Everybody was very accommodating,” she said. “I just want to say congratulations to all of the wonderful workers.”

**Congratulations on another award**

Ovens & King Builders would like to thank the following individuals and businesses for their contribution to the Award winning homes.

**Best Renovation/Addition**

**$300,000-$500,000**

- Greta Road Timber
- Superior Joinery
- Paul Dean Plastering
- Alpine Truss
- Lucky Howden Lock Supply
- Murray Valley Floor Sanding
- Wangaratta Tile Centre
- Dahlsens
- North East Fasteners
- Neville McCormick Building Surveyor

**Best Sustainable Energy Home**

- CAE Concreting
- Beechworth Home Hardware
- Superior Joinery
- P.S. Brown Electrical
- Paul Dean Plastering
- JT Stone & Sons Plumbing
- Gino Pizzini Tiling
- Reece
- Greta Road Timber
- North East Glass
- STY Metals
- Henshall & Preston Painting
- Pulvirenti Tiles
- Dahlsens
- Ovens & King Communications
- Outlook Alternatives

**Award Winners**

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- Ovens & King Communications
- Outlook Alternatives
THE work completed by Ovens and King Builders on the “Rose Valley” homestead was the continuation of a longstanding client–builder relationship.

“It’s actually the third time around that we’ve worked with these particular clients, building a custom designed renovation of a dwelling on this same property,” said Lachie Gales from Ovens and King Builders.

“Working at ‘Rose Valley’ has always been a pleasure for us.

“We’ve previously worked on the “Brown House” and the “Bungalow” at “Rose Valley”, the former being a complete transformation of a building that was near the end of its usable life.

“The homestead has been the home of the farm managers for more than a decade and we were pleased to be invited be part of their next venture, an invitation that reflects the quality of our ongoing relationship.

“Together we make a formidable combination, combining practical skills, a great sense of style and lots of energy.

“The challenges the project presented were always resolved through a collaborative partnership between client and builder.

“The relative isolation of the property meant co-ordination of labor, sub-contractors and deliveries of building materials was inherently difficult.

“Communication to the site was limited to a single landline and email access was not available.

“The clients had an inherent understanding of these factors and were supportive in every way as we grappled with delivery and scheduling issues.

“Our crew, led by James Coles, stayed on site overnight in the initial stages, making use of the bungalow kindly provided by our clients.

“This helped manage fatigue of our crews undertaking a relatively long project.

“Mr Gales said the family in residence in the homestead stayed in place for much of the build period, ultimately shifting to the adjacent bungalow in the latter stages of the project.

“Maintaining their comfort and safety was a major priority for us,” he said.

“Mr Gales added that there were no problems with communication or teamwork with the clients.

“We were able to work together to build the high standard we were all committed to whilst reducing the inconvenience to the clients caused by the works as much as we could.

“With clients as valued as everyone at ‘Rose Valley’ are to us, it’s our pleasure to continue to make the trip to their spectacular property.

“We greatly appreciate their ongoing support for our business.”