CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

This year, Englehart Homes celebrates 40 years in the home construction business. Jacinta Walsh speaks with Ron Englehart, the company’s managing director, to discuss its enduring success.
I t’s one thing to excel within an industry, but to consistently do so for more than 40 years is an achievement like no other. Englehart Homes is a company that never deviates from its values and beliefs to offer the discerning Victorian public the best in custom luxury homes.

Over the years, Englehart Homes has provided its clients with industry-leading craftsmanship, innovative designs and a commitment to customer satisfaction. The knowledgeable team strive for honesty, integrity and confidence in their operations, and it’s this dedication to consistency that sets them apart from their competitors.

From the very beginning, Ron Englehart knew that buyers at the top end of the market look for homes that are high-quality, architecturally pleasing and environmentally friendly. These ideals combined with strong street appeal, careful attention to detail, and smart design has set the tone for Englehart Homes’ luxury properties throughout Victoria for almost half a century.

A NICHE OF THEIR OWN

The company’s success can largely be attributed to its creation of a niche market based on the fundamentals of producing personalised designer homes that are both visually striking and functional. “We specialise in building custom luxury homes, which are influenced by both our current and past display homes,” Englehart says. “The majority of our homes are inspired by renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright, as well as French Provincial and contemporary cutting-edge designs.”

The company’s first home, the Cooinda, is still as fresh in the minds of the Englehart Homes team as it was upon its 1980 release. “The Cooinda was a new style of home that had a dramatically unique external appearance combined with an innovative internal design,” Englehart says. Beginning with such an ambitious concept gave the company the push it needed to maintain its momentum over the proceeding decades. “Our current multi-award-winning display homes La Provence and the Koojing, along with the recently opened Illoura design, have consolidated the Englehart Homes brand as a leader in luxury custom home design,” adds the proud founder.

A WINNING BUSINESS MODEL

As Englehart Homes continues to create outstanding properties that are custom-designed to suit the needs of every client, the company continues to hold appeal in Australia, while also attracting the Chinese market. “The company’s winning business model is based upon satisfying an increasingly important segment of the market – buyers who want a high-end home designed by an architect, with guaranteed results,” Englehart says.

It’s the company’s ability to change and adapt to the current climate that keeps homebuyers interested. “We continue to introduce new designs to the market which are suited to different lifestyles, tastes and budgets,” says Englehart, who believes it’s important to establish what buyers need. “Major trends relate to environmental efficiency and floor-plan zoning, such as the replacement of formal dining and living rooms with larger meal and adjoining family areas, and an ensuite to each bedroom. The increasing popularity of the butler’s kitchen and multipurpose rooms replacing rumpus rooms to cater for home theatres (and other novelties) has also been influenced by the Chinese market.”

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With Melbourne’s population predicted to double over the next few decades, high-density living is also on the rise. “Many large inner-ring blocks of land will be replaced with townhouses or dual-occupancy developments, large modern luxury homes and apartments,” says Englehart, who sees this as an opportunity for growth. “The Englehart Homes brand will continue to consolidate its position in the market as a leader in luxury custom homes as a result of brand recognition, continued product planning influenced by consumer and market research, and a strong management team.”

A WORTHY APPRAISAL

As the inaugural chairman of the Housing Industry Association’s (HIA) Victorian Region Planning, Environment and Development Committee and the first National HIA Greensmart Leader, Englehart has always worked towards creating a better future for all Victorians. As a result, he was also recognised for his role in promoting sustainable development in 2001, when he received the Australian Government Centenary medal for services in building design and construction. Englehart Homes was also recognised in the same year as the inaugural winner at both a state and national level for Most Energy Efficient Home at the Master Builders Association (MBA) National Excellence Awards. “Englehart Homes has been recognised by numerous industry awards, which has resulted in more than 100 major state and national awards, including Master Builder and Professional Builder of the Year,” Englehart says.

While Englehart Homes has achieved many accolades over the years, the greatest honour was bestowed upon Englehart in 2015, when he was elected as a HIA life member – a prestigious award reserved for a select few who make an exceptional contribution to the housing industry. This active participation in the industry and passion for growth is something that drives Englehart Homes into the future. “The principles employed 60 years ago are still applicable today,” Englehart says. “The twin pillars of quality and innovation are at the foundation of everything we do.”

None of this would have been possible without a team of strong-minded individuals at the core of the operation. “We believe in a system of business action that incorporates honesty, integrity and confidence,” Englehart says. It’s these three qualities that instil a sense of pride in all who work alongside him.

A TRUE SUCCESS

If you’re in the market for a new home, Englehart has some suggestions to ensure that you come away with the best result. “Take care in selecting your home designer and builder to ensure that all documentation is adequate,” he says. “Englehart Homes offers a full design-and-construct service that minimises architect fees and aims to create homes in line with the client’s budget.” This eliminates the risks of working with independent architects and contractors.

“Our ongoing success and luxury-home market leadership can be largely attributed to maintaining demanding standards, both in construction and our general management of the operation and the people involved in our company,” says Englehart. “This combined with high-quality construction, consistency and client satisfaction from a most discerning target market is what separates Englehart Homes from other builders. We are continually inspired by the ethos, ‘You are only as good as the last home you’ve built.’”

Images courtesy of Englehart Homes