

New arts facilities at St Luke's



// words Tony Whitbread

The new Performing and Applied Arts Centre at St Luke's Catholic Primary School in Woodvale is an outstanding example of clever design, smart engineering and quality construction principles coming together to create a building that is admired by professionals in the construction industry, school staff, students and the community in general.

Gavin Construction of Canning Highway, Como, recently completed the construction of the St Luke's Centre under the Federal Government's Building Education Revolution program (BER). The superintendent/architect was Ronal Hawkins Architects.

The BER program is the single largest element of the Australian Government's \$42 billion Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan with about 24,000 projects being delivered in every community in Australia.

The \$16.2 billion BER program aims to modernise schools through the delivery of necessary infrastructure while simultaneously providing local jobs and stimulating investment.

The BER is now in its most dynamic phase with construction underway in thousands of schools across the country. In many locations, students, teachers and their communities are already enjoying the benefits of recently completed projects.

The St Luke's Centre building complex comprises two separate buildings with separate, in-house functions.

The external finishes of the buildings include exposed structural steel, multi-coloured vertical cladding panels and sand/cement render with wave-painted walls. The roof is clad with Colorbond sheeting.

Although the materials are simple, the colour of the splayed walls and the oval, circular and offset rectilinear windows come together to create an impressive and interesting finish.

An outdoor performance area and an elevated stage for performers are cleverly set between the Performing Arts Building and the Visual Arts Building. Both buildings are joined with a covered area that forms a transition space linking the buildings to the landscaped setting.

The ground finishes between the buildings are made up of varying colours and textures of soft-fall TigerTurf synthetic grass with a 35mm pile.

The ground floor of the main building is more than three metres higher than the car park at the Duffy Terrace end of the site. The car park is accessed by means of winding concrete pathways and steps hand-seeded with honed and acid-washed laterite.

Multi-coloured, interlocking BGC Decopave pavers, laid diagonally and bounded by a header course, provide a smooth finish to the main terrace areas immediately outside the buildings.

The plant selection includes native trees and shrubs intended to simulate a desert landscape and designed to reduce water consumption needed for irrigation. The design for the project included good practice principles of sustainability. The buildings are connected to water collection systems using rainwater tanks to service the toilet facilities and a separate rain water collection and reticulation system that supports the landscaping. Solar panels are strategically positioned on the appropriate roof surfaces.

Inside the buildings, evidence of quality

THE TEAM

GAVIN
CONSTRUCTION



is immediately noticeable. The level of finish achieved by Gavin Construction is impeccable and reflected in the choice of materials, including the canteen's stainless steel bench tops, the timber flooring, the acoustic ceilings formed with aluminium mini-strips, and the installation of interactive, digital whiteboards.

The groundwork for the buildings and landscape were the result of long-term aims of the school developed in collaboration with Terry Farrell, Architect.

The project's aim was to create a strong visual environment of building and artworks that introduced children to an appreciation of the arts at an early age. The program was also directed towards sustainable values with emphasis on recycling, water and energy saving.

The BER funding provided the opportunity to produce an arts building and its landscaped setting as an integrated design, incorporating those features.

The form of the building and elements such as its windows, were designed to produce a different environment to the norms of both school and home architecture.

The Performing Arts Building consists of two sections that cater for dance and, separately, speech teaching and performing. The second building, the Applied Arts Building, accommodates teaching facilities for the visual arts.

An important aspect of the school's philosophy has been emulated by the collaborative manner in which the school was

designed and built. The facility was designed by Terry Farrell and documented and implemented by Ronal Hawkins and Robert Allan, both independent architects, who worked together on this project.

The site presented several challenges in that the existing levels were tiered. Large quantities of earth had to be retained with cavity-filled block work. This was planned in sequence, working from within the site back towards Duffy Terrace on the outer, lower edge of the site.

When excavation started, a significant number of limestone pinnacles were discovered which frustrated construction program targets but, with clever planning and with a dedicated sub-contract team of earthworkers, program targets were ultimately met.

Gavin Construction believes that client satisfaction is paramount to building a good reputation. Accordingly, the company is committed to providing its clients with a professional, efficient and friendly service, supported by the delivery of a product that surpasses their expectations.

The company's recognition as industry leaders is testament to its commitment to professional client service and quality workmanship.

Two Irish brothers started the company 40 years ago, with pride of workmanship and a sense of humour as the cornerstone of their business. Now in its second generation of family ownership, the name Gavin Construction has become synonymous with commitment and customer satisfaction in the building and construction industry. **BC**

Gavin Construction: (08) 9330 8000, www.gavinconstruction.com.au



TYRONE MASONRY

Phone (08) 9344 4346
 Fax (08) 9344 4348
www.tyronebricklaying.com.au

Unit 4 / 1 Halley Rd
 Balcatta WA 6021

PO Box 359,
 Osborne Park WA 6917

Proud to be associated with Gavin Construction

J WATTS CONTRACTING PTY LTD
 Reg 2227 & 6801


PAINTING CONTRACTORS

COMMERCIAL

LARGE RESIDENTIAL

0418 940774

Fax (08) 93092694
 Phone (08) 93095605
 Email jwattscontracting@bigpond.com
 4 Edgel Court, Kingsley WA 6026



MPA
 MASTER PAINTERS AUSTRALIA

MASTER BUILDERS MEMBER