



**CHAMBER STALWARTS:** Greg Mills (Rendine Constructions), Brad Tattersall (Tuckers Funeral & Bereavement Service), Justin McGrath (Davidsons), Gerald Miller (GMHBA) and Nick Lord (Maxwell Collins) with their Member Recognition Certificates at the Chamber After 5 AGM.

PICTURE: BAREFOOT MEDIA

## Chamber celebrates contribution of five businesses

# Firms of long standing

**CELEBRATING** success and recognising the journey that leads to success, whether in personal lives or in business, are fundamental elements to building and sustaining strong, connected communities.

The Geelong Chamber of Commerce, celebrating its 165th anniversary this year, was pleased to celebrate and recognise five member milestones at its recent annual general meeting.

Several years ago the chamber recognised the 100th year of membership of the Geelong Chamber of Commerce by Fagg's Mitre 10. It is hard to fathom that one company, spanning several generations, would reach such a milestone.

It is this connectedness and sense of belonging that helps drive and underpin the strength of our business community.

This year we recognised two members celebrating 70 continuous years of member-

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ship of the chamber — Maxwell Collins Real Estate and Tuckers Funeral and Bereavement Service.

When these businesses joined the chamber in 1948, the president of the day was Herbert Blakiston, a well-known Geelong name now enshrined in Geelong's industrial and economic history.

In post-war 1948, the chamber appointed C.H. Neale, commissioner of road transport in NSW, to study Geelong's transport problems with his report delivered to the Victorian Government.

In that year the chamber sent a successful deputation to the railway commissioners on the duplication of the line to

Melbourne with works starting some 10 years later.

Geelong was an expanding and thriving city with an economy reaping the benefits of modernisation, an influx of migrants and growing levels of consumerism and wealth.

Fast forward to 2018 and the chamber was also pleased to recognise Davidsons and GMHBA for 40 years of membership along with Rendine Constructions celebrating 30 years of membership.

Each business is to be congratulated for its contribution to Geelong as we know it today.

A resounding theme that each of these businesses made comment on is the importance of connection and being part of a greater story for Geelong and its business community.

Being connected and engaging in their community has underpinned the values and stories of each of these incredible businesses.

Their journeys may have been different, but each business has been a part of the "Geelong story" — employing countless locals, contributing to countless local community causes, enriching and adding to the vibrant economy that we have today.

For that we say, thank you and well done — sentiments we do not often hear in relation to business.

But if we reflect on the true value our business community offers, it is not hard to understand why they are referred to as the "engine room of the economy".

It is the vision, passion and dedication that the individuals behind these businesses have shown, often over many generations, that makes their achievements all that more remarkable.

It is why the chamber is proud to deliver each year the Deakin University Geelong Business Excellence Awards.

These awards celebrate and recognise the often quiet, but outstanding achievements of our region's best and brightest.

The awards culminate in the largest business gala event in Geelong with prizes awarded across 20 categories, including Business of the Year and individual categories of Business Leader of the Year and Young Entrepreneur of the Year.

Entries close at 4pm on May 7, so there is still time to enter.

Who knows, your business may one day celebrate its 100th year of membership of the chamber. You may not be around to see it, but your dream may well become a central part of Geelong's future.

Surely that is something worth celebrating?

**Bernadette Uzelac is chief executive of the Geelong Chamber of Commerce.**

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