

Brisbane agency celebrates 80th anniversary

The *REIQ Journal* was invited to celebrate the 80th anniversary of Matthews Real Estate in mid-August. The Annerley-based agency has been a family business since it was established way back in 1933 so we sat down with principals Trevor and Ken Matthews to find out the secrets to their long history.



What are some of the highlights during your agency's history?

"One of the highlights has been our firm being voted as the Most User Friendly Team in Queensland and acclaimed as one of the Top 10 Real Estate Agencies in an Australian-wide survey by Test Purchasing Australia in 1992," Trevor says.

"We were the only agency in Queensland to make the Top 10 from a final shortlist of 400 agencies. The survey involved polling thousands of people throughout Australia and the final assessment was then made from a result of a business approach level to the short list of agencies without any knowledge of the survey being disclosed. Personalised service is our hallmark and it is something about which we are very proud.

"We are very proud of the fact that for more than 60 years we have on numerous occasions been entrusted to act as auctioneers/real estate agents for several government departments, all of the major banks and several Trust companies and building societies. Many of these associations continue today."

"We are also very proud of the fact that we have continuously acted as managing agents for owners of several rental properties with their origins dating back to the 1960s. These managements continue today. They have stuck with us for 40-plus years – we look forward to the next 40 years together!" Ken says.

What are some of the main changes that you have experienced in all the years you have been involved in real estate?

"The most significant change for real estate practitioners has obviously been the introduction of the internet. It has changed the way we deal with buyers, sellers and renters. No longer do we have every tenant coming personally to pay rent, mostly it is paid directly into the bank account. So many things can be done on-line and advertising has changed; no longer does the newspaper hold an absolute monopoly; property websites are now the main search avenue," Ken says.

"Inspections have changed. No longer do we sit on properties for an hour, half an hour is now the norm. In the 60s we used to open a house all weekend! No longer do we taxi buyers around to look at properties – they invariably meet us on-site whether at an open inspection or individual inspection," Trevor says.

"Although the changes are significant, the basics are still the same. Good service to all of your clients or customers; honesty in all of your dealings."

What is it that continues to drive your family's involvement in real estate?

"Who knows? It seems to be in the blood. There's a sense of responsibility that we have grown up with to carry on the business. It's not a burden or a chore, but on honour, to be entrusted as the custodians of our family's legacy, to take care of this reputation and see that it survives. The fourth generation of Matthews' are well prepared to take the baton. A legacy is something that many never get to be a part of ... yet we can see Matthews Real Estate being transitioned before our very eyes," Russell says.

What is the secret to a successful family business such as yours?

"Luck. Though there is a famous quote which says "the harder I work, the luckier I get". We work hard for our luck. It also helps that "shelter" is a basic human need," Russell says. 