



The 2021 Lifetime Achievement Awards

FOR THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR, THE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS PRESENTATION WAS HELD AS A VIRTUAL CEREMONY AND ONCE AGAIN WE WELCOMED A FULL COMPLEMENT OF ATTENDEES FROM ACROSS THE INDUSTRY AND AROUND THE WORLD.

The event got underway with an Acknowledgement of Country, where we recognised the Indigenous peoples of the Kulin Nation as the traditional custodians of the place from which we broadcast in Central Victoria, paying respects to the Elders past, present and emerging.

Following a brief introduction of the program where we once again acknowledged the support of our sponsors, we broadcast a slideshow highlighting some of the great events and initiatives that were delivered in Australia over the past 12 months.

This event was, of course, to recognise the contributions of the inductees for 2021 and add them to the 46 existing inductees who have shaped, built, disrupted, influenced and developed the collision repair industry since the second half of the

20th century. This year there were nine worthy nominations from around the country, although four in particular attracted the attention of our voters – the sponsors and existing inductees. The inclusion of this year’s four inductees brings the collective experience of all 50 inductees to over 1,650 years!

Steve Economidis

David Rundle of AkzoNobel, a long-time friend of the family, announced that the first inductee was Steve Economidis who, as most of the industry knows, passed away earlier this year, leaving a great legacy at Gabba Collision Repair Centre.

David shared that Steve was a longstanding, hardworking and successful leader in the collision repair industry and an icon in and around



Brisbane. His philosophy was to always set the highest standards for himself, his business and his staff.

Steve built a business based on working cooperatively with many other stakeholders, including several work providers, and became a preferred supplier to many brands in the Queensland market. In addition, he understood the true value of OEM partnerships, becoming an OEM-approved repairer for various brands from both Asia and Europe.

However, it was his innovative approach to customer service and

Collision Repairer LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD	
2007 RICHARD NATHAN DAVID WEATHERALL	2013 JOHN ZULIAN TOM VUKELIC
2008 TERRY FLANAGAN (OAM) MARSHALL DUNCAN GRAHAM WINTER	ROBIN TAYLOR RAY McMARTIN COLIN EDWARDS
JEFF HENDLER (Int)	2014 IAN WILKINSON JULIE THOMAS
2009 MAX CHANTER JOHN HOWES	BRIAN JOHNSON TERRY FEEHAN
ROBERT RENWICK (Int) DAVID NEWTON-ROSS	2015 OWEN WEBB (OAM) PHIL NIXON
2010 WAYNE PHIPPS RICHARD PRATT BOB REES	TREVOR PARKES 2016 TONY WARRENER (OAM) BRENTON ABBOTT
2011 LANCE WEISS MARK BRADY DON WAIT (OAM)	2017 MICHAEL KILLEN CARL TINSLEY
2012 TONY FARRUGIA BOB CHRISTIE	PER MADSEN (Int) REX CROWTHER (Int)

Collision Repairer LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD	
2018 GARRY CLEAR CEC SIMPSON MICHAEL WILKINSON	
2019 MARK CZVITKOVITS MARTIN STONE (AM) JULIE WADLEY	
WALTER ZUBER (Int)	
2020 BRAD FRANKLIN JIM VAIS JEFF WILLIAMS	
2021 STEVE ECONOMIDIS GARRY MAHER PETER MCMAHON ROB MILDENHALL	



David Rundle presents the award to Paul and Jennifer Economidis.

ongoing communication at a time of great stress for his customers that made him, and his business, really stand out. A multi-award-winning business over the past decade, Steve's commitment to delivering a safe and proper repair ensured customers leave the business with total confidence.

In an understandably emotional setting, David presented the award to Steve's wife, Jennifer, and son, Paul, who accepted the award on Steve's behalf. Paul said that his dad would be both proud and humbled to receive such recognition and added that it was a really special day for the family.

Peter McMahon

Jeff Williams of Specific Prestige in SA announced that the second inductee for 2021 was Peter McMahon of the Car Craft Group in WA.

Jeff pointed out that Peter began his automotive career almost 30 years ago in Adelaide dealerships before he joined MTA SA as a Divisional Manager

looking after the big three – towing, auto recycling and collision repair. Peter was thrown into the deep end in his first week when he attended his first AMBRA meeting in Canberra, where the Code of Conduct was always the main agenda item.

Impending changes created a vacancy about which Peter raised his concern, which in turn led to him being nominated and elected in 2010, although this was not the intent. He remained part of the Code Administration Committee until 2015, including a period as chairman between 2013 and 2015.

In 2015 Peter relocated to Perth to join the Car Craft Group and began to coordinate the national expansion across Australia, taking the membership from 71 across three states, to 115 across mainland Australia. A key part of that expansion was the promotion of AMBRA Shop Grading and I-CAR training among the group. He was invited to join the

I-CAR board (now the Industry Advisory Committee) in 2017 and is still an active member to this day.

He also remains a key contributor to the industry and has been the WA AMBRA delegate for the past three years and remains a board member of the body repair division at MTA WA.

Mark Brady, Chairman of Car Craft in WA, made the presentation in the presence of several of Peter's colleagues at the Car Craft Group head office in Perth. Peter thanked the Car Craft board, his former AMBRA colleagues from around the country with whom he has worked and his dear friend and mentor, George Papillo, a former MTA Board member who sadly passed away 12 months ago.

Garry Maher

Phil Nixon announced that the third inductee was Garry Maher of L&M Smash Repairs. Garry joined the collision repair industry over 40 years ago and in that time never considered any other career.

Garry is the second-generation owner of L&M Smash Repairs and over the decades has built a reputation as a quality and reliable collision repairer. His promise to his clients is to ensure customer satisfaction by making the experience as stress-free as possible, with full transparency during the entire process.

In his early years, Garry travelled the world looking to expand his knowledge of the modern repair processes, working with equipment suppliers, attending many expos, and jumping at the opportunity to go to



Mark Brady presents the award to Peter McMahon.



Garry Maher was (almost) speechless.



the US for training on structural alignment at the Chief Automotive College. This really opened his eyes to the importance of structural engineering, following which he became the Australian distributor of Chief. Garry also ran several pilot courses for IAG on a variety of subjects and he would always ensure he could relate to the class in layman's terms.

However, his proudest work-related achievement has been as an instructor for I-CAR Australia, which he has done for the past 12 years. He was one of the first to be Gold Class certified, which he has retained to this day. His commitment to helping others has been his driving force over a lifetime in the industry.

With NSW still in lockdown, Garry's son Daniel made the surprise presentation at their facility in Seven Hills. Garry said that it was so great to see so many icons from around the country, and that as Daniel has now taken over the operation, Garry was concentrating on giving back to the industry. He added that the recognition that this award brings means so much to the team at LMSR.

Rob Mildenhall

And finally, 2009 inductee, and founder of these awards, David Newton-Ross, announced the fourth inductee for 2021 was Rob Mildenhall of Capricorn Society.

Rob joined the automotive industry almost 40 years ago, with the past 20 years spent in collision repair. In his early years in South Africa, he worked with multinational organisations and served as National Chairman of the Motor Industry Workshop Association. Rob then joined an embryonic Capricorn Society in 2001 and was instrumental in developing a network across the Body Repair Division and a key player in the roll out of the organisation.

He immigrated to Australia in 2010 and inherited a dual role as National Panel Manager and Business Development Manager, NSW. Rob has made several contributions to the local collision repair industry, including championing the cause for safe and proper repairs; liaising with industry bodies to build the bridge between manufacturers, suppliers and independent body shops; and supporting several initiatives that raise

the profile of the industry. He initiated, and continues to publish, the quarterly member magazine, "Panel", and was instrumental in Capricorn's Futures Collide Forum that brought the industry together in 2019.

David first met Rob not long after he arrived in Australia when he reached out to find out more about the collision repair industry. They spent most of the day discussing the industry have become great friends as well as sharing many experiences in the industry. David said that the award is well deserved and that he has enjoyed watching Rob's progress and his contribution to our industry, which is a testament to his knowledge, commitment and passion for helping develop a stronger, better collision repair sector.

As a result of the NSW lockdown, David made a virtual presentation to Rob who shared the moment with his partner Angela. Rob said that he was most unusually stuck for words and was genuinely touched. He recognised that the industry has so many inspirational people and reflected on his early days in Australia when he was finding his way. Finally, he thanked the broad Capricorn Team and, most importantly, the members for their support.

In summary

Once again, we thanked our broadcast partners, Encore Event Technologies, the many people from across the country who joined the broadcast in these challenging times, and our international colleagues from New Zealand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand, Denmark and the US. This once again reinforces that the event continues to grow in international stature.

Of course, this initiative is only made possible by the support of our sponsors, and we once again thank them all for their support, especially in such a challenging year, and we look forward to returning in 2022 with a live presentation dinner on 6 April.



David Newton-Ross presents the award to Rob Mildenhall.

Josephine and I congratulate Steve, Peter, Garry and Rob on being recognised by their peers for a lifetime of achievement and contribution to the industry. They have formally been inducted onto the Honour Roll, which you will find on our website: www.nationalcollisionrepairer.com.au/lifetime-awards/



THE NATIONAL Collision Repairer

LIFETIME Achievement Awards

We congratulate Garry Maher, Peter McMahon, Steve Economidis and Rob Mildenhall on being recognised by their peers for a lifetime of achievement and contribution to the industry.



Garry Maher



Peter McMahon



Steve Economidis



Rob Mildenhall

We thank and acknowledge the following companies for their ongoing support of these awards.

