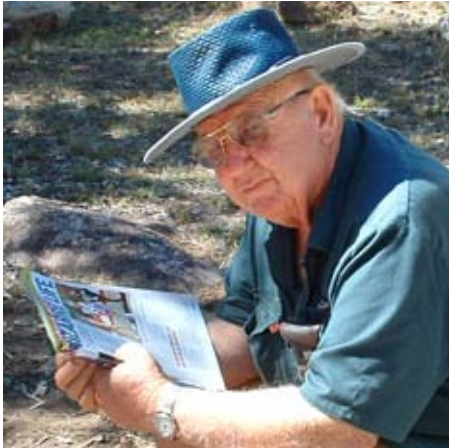


Garry Mason

Site Foreman



Around the block and back

Garry Mason and his loyal entourage—a blue heeler called Wally, a cat called Killer, a bird called Fred and the human love of his life, Gail—would have attracted some strange looks over the years.

Everywhere the Woollam Constructions employee went, his ‘family’ followed.

Travelling all over Queensland in his caravan, Garry would arrive in town, set up shop and employ locals with the purchase of a nail bag thrown in. Together, Garry and Gail worked on some of Queensland’s most iconic buildings, including the Stockman’s Hall of Fame at Longreach.

Since joining the Woollam Constructions team in 1966, Garry has worked as foreman and site manager constructing hospitals, banks, service stations, hotel, schools, churches, retirement homes, nursing homes, cultural centres, commercial buildings, motels, railway stations, cinemas and a prison.

And Garry, who has been blessed with an exceptional memory that allows him to store intricate details of site plans in his head, has kept his down-to-earth attitude for every job. “I never expected anyone to do anything I couldn’t do myself,” he explains. “If someone comes up with a good idea I’m all ears – none of us are perfect!”

One good idea, recalled by fellow colleague, David McNichol, was at a Sunday BBQ where Garry returned from a visit to the local tip with a truck’s mudguard plate and reinvented it as the barbie plate for that day’s lunch!

Life in the construction industry is not without its problems, but when other people throw their hands in the air, Garry patiently works out the best way to get the job done. “When I was 21, my father told me: ‘If you can think about it you can do it’. And it’s true. I’ve always liked what I was doing because it has been challenging. I love a good challenge.”

Having worked with three generations of Woollams over the last 40 years or so, Garry has seen a lot of changes, both in the company and in the construction industry. “There’s a lot more paperwork now and I enjoyed it more before all the safety regulations came in, but that’s life. You just have to keep happy go lucky and get on with it!”

Garry’s wife Gail worked with him for 15 years before retiring from Woollams. “I was his lackey,” she explains with a cheeky grin. “I lacked height; I lacked strength; and I lacked intelligence”.

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