



A.G. Coombs

Media Release

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70 years for A.G. Coombs

'A Singular Vision – the A.G. Coombs Story' explores the formative years and growth of one of Australia's leading building services companies.

This anniversary publication documents not only the history of A.G. Coombs but also the introduction of air conditioning to Australia. The images record the construction of significant commercial and public buildings and that will be familiar to a wider audience.

Headquartered in Melbourne, A.G. Coombs was established by Allan George Coombs in August 1945 at the end of the Second World War. A plumber by trade, Allan possessed nothing but a pushbike, a kit of tools and a bucket-load of determination when he started his business.

Assisted by a small loan, Allan purchased an Austin utility truck, appointed his first apprentice and built a garage and workshop in the backyard of his brother's home. After outgrowing this space – and with his workload rapidly increasing – he purchased some land in Moorabbin, what was at the time Melbourne's outer south east, and, by 1953, had built a factory and office in an area that was then just open paddocks. A man of vision, he also established on-site manufacturing facilities to produce ductwork and other sheet metal products.

A.G. Coombs' first big break came when it was contracted to install the plumbing at the Olympic Village in the lead up to the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne. Soon after, Allan repositioned his business to focus on commercial air conditioning, which was being more widely introduced throughout Australia.

Between 1955 and 1963, A.G. Coombs installed the air conditioning and mechanical services at the former Royal Children's Hospital complex in Melbourne. The project was recognised at the time as Australia's largest mechanical services contract. Allan went on to play a leading role in the establishment of industry standards and trade based training for the industry, and the founding of the Air Conditioning and Mechanical Contractors Association. He was recognised for his contribution to the industry with an Order of Australia (AM) in the 1979 New Year's Honours List.

With its reputation for technical excellence, A.G. Coombs has gone on to air condition and install building services in prominent facilities such as Wrest Point Casino, Collins Place, the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, 120 Collins Street, Crown Entertainment Complex, the John Gorton Building, the ANZ Centre, the new Royal Children's Hospital, Hamer Hall, The University of Queensland's Oral Health Centre, Barangaroo South and Darling Harbour Live.

Today, A.G. Coombs is a privately owned national business with major operations in Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney and Brisbane. The company is now regarded as the leading building services specialist, providing customers with a whole-of-life service encompassing technical advice, design, engineering, prefabrication, installations and commissioning. A.G. Coombs also maintains and operates a wide range of services in award-winning, energy-efficient buildings.

"Over the past seven decades, there have been so many milestones to acknowledge that A.G. Coombs felt it appropriate to record them in an official history", said A.G. Coombs Group Managing Director, Russell Telford. "Importantly, we are not just telling our story but, in many ways, the story of our industry. Compiling this history has allowed us to appreciate and better understand our journey. It has also highlighted how we have evolved as a company and contributed to advancing the industry in which we operate.

"The book marks a significant point in the A.G. Coombs story, as we look forward to the next chapter of our journey."

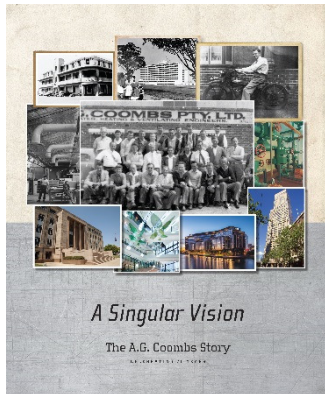
Read more on 'A Singular Vision' at <http://www.agcoombs.com.au/asingularvision/>.



Images:



Allan Coombs and his team outside the company's new premises at Cochranes Road, Moorabbin, Christmas 1956.



'A Singular Vision – The A.G. Coombs Story – Celebrating 70 Years' was published in 2015, documenting the history of A.G. Coombs as well as the introduction of air conditioning to Australia.

Hi-res image is available upon request.

About A.G. Coombs Pty Ltd

The A.G. Coombs Group is a privately owned Australian group of companies that provides an integrated range of technical services for all systems in buildings; from design through to installation, commissioning, maintenance and ongoing operation and management. Technologies include air conditioning and mechanical services, fire protection, hydraulics, electrical services and lighting, as well as building control technologies. Founded in 1945, A.G. Coombs has a national capability with major operations on Australia's eastern seaboard.

For more information on A.G. Coombs, please contact:

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