



# COURTNEY WILSON

## KEEPING GLASS AND GLAZING IN THE FAMILY

For Courtney Wilson, growing up in a home with a Master Glazier Father and business owner parents inspired her to buy and grow the Cairns Glass & Glazing family business in 2018.

'Dad began his glazing career replacing windows in the Whitsundays, and in 1992 he and Mum decided to lay the foundations of a business called Cairns Glass & Glazing' says Courtney Wilson. Both Courtney's parents worked hard to grow Cairns Glass & Glazing to the busy and successful business it is today. The business employs 13 people, boasts over 100 years of collective experience and services more than a 250 km area around Cairns with glass, glazing, domestic and commercial aluminum fabrication and emergency repairs.

'Growing up, I had seen all the incredible things that we could do with glass, such as glazing to multi-million-dollar watercraft,

innovative high-rise buildings, commercial shop fronts, high-end stores and safety shield glass for banks. I always aspired to have the same business drive as my father, so it seemed only natural to start up my own glazing company on Thursday Island in the Torres Strait in 2013'.

Barry Wilson was named one of the first Master Glaziers in Australia in 2016. 'This was such an amazing achievement for him and topped off a successful career in the industry' says Courtney. 'In 2018, Dad was reaching retirement age and wanted to sell. I decided to sell my share of Torres Strait Glass & Glazing and put my roots back in my hometown.' Since then, Courtney has been expanding and developing Cairns Glass to what it is today. As a 35-year-old Mum of four, this business has given Courtney the opportunity to provide her kids with a great life.

Cairns Glass & Glazing is an excellent example of a business that has learnt how to overcome the challenges of operating in a regional area with an extremely hot and humid climate. In both commercial and residential projects, Cairns Glass works closely with engineers and their own design







team to help clients choose the right energy-rated glass and window systems, depending if insulation, energy saving or acoustic noise reduction is the most important factor.

Courtney recounts her biggest challenge so far as navigating the company operations and staff shortages through the pandemic, as well as international supply shortages that have crippled the building industry.

Cairns Glass & Glazing is an all-rounder business, capable of all aspects of glass and glazing. They are most renowned for emergency glazing work, which involves fast turnaround, insurance claim work, and a 24-hour emergency repair service. Courtney recalls, 'One of our more memorable emergency repair jobs was when a large 4 m high glass shopfront panel in a Cairns shopping centre spontaneously exploded in the middle of the night, spreading broken glass throughout the centre. We were tasked with the clean-up and board-up of the large opening before the centre resumed trade at 7 am the next morning. We had our glaziers working through the night to secure the shopfront.'

'We have also attended one of the largest schools in the region following vandal damage, where we had to instantly replace over 40 windows to help our clients get the school open and operational again.'

Cairns Glass & Glazing has recently completed a project with local tourism operators 'Sunlover Cruises'. Courtney says, 'We worked alongside their designers to identify the exact glass products to the engineer's specifications for their new multi-million dollar submarine semi-submersible viewing platform. We successfully sourced, installed and sealed all the glass on the dry dock wharf in Cairns. This platform is now moored on the outer Great Barrier Reef and is being used on a regular basis by visitors to the region.'

Cairns Glass & Glazing is committed to leaving a legacy in the glass and glazing industry. The business is helping to fill the skills shortage in their industry by training four apprentices, as well as helping to close the gap by employing 50% of its workforce from indigenous backgrounds. 'We have such a diverse and skilled team and I can attribute the company's success to each and every staff member we have on board. I wouldn't be where I am without my amazing crew!'



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