

Mr Keith Eric Cottier AM

The degree of Doctor of Science in Architecture (honoris causa) was conferred upon Keith Eric Cottier AM at the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning graduation ceremony held at 2.00pm on 27 November 2009.



The Chancellor Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO and Keith Eric Cottier AM, *photo, copyright Memento Photography.*

Citation

Chancellor, I present to you Keith Eric Cottier for the conferring of the degree of Doctor of Science in Architecture (honoris causa).

Keith Cottier was born in Sydney in 1938. At the age of 16 he began architectural studies at the Sydney Technical College in 1954, whilst working in the office of John Allen and Russell C Jack.

He soon proved to be a gifted student with a flair for design and drawing, publishing his first design before graduation.

In 1960 he won the New South Wales Board of Architects Travelling Scholarship, which allowed him visit France, Italy and Austria where he learnt the lessons of adding to historic buildings with skill, flair and sensitivity.

He subsequently worked in London and travelled extensively in Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland, soaking up the work of iconic Modernists Erik Gunnar Asplund and Alvar Aalto.

Upon his return to Sydney in 1963 he returned to work for Allen and Jack where his first major project, at age 26, was the design of Clubbe Hall at the Frensham School, and in 1965 he became a partner in the firm renamed Allen Jack & Cottier. Keith's design skills were recognized early when Clubbe Hall won the prestigious Royal Australian Institute of Architects' Blacket Award in 1967.

Keith's star as an architect rapidly rose as the guiding design hand of Allen Jack + Cottier. Subsequently he single-handedly fostered the development of the architectural typology of the winery to a high level of architectural achievement, establishing a new rural building type throughout Australia. The first of his wineries, built for the Rothbury Estate in the Hunter Valley, won for Cottier the Blacket Award (1971) for the second time, followed by the Domaine Chandon Winery at Coldstream in Victoria (1990) and Penfold's Magill Estate Winery, in South Australia which won a National RAI A Merit Award (1996) and six other RAI A and related industry awards.

Throughout his career Keith has demonstrated an abiding interest and recognized skill in sensitively adding to and adapting historic and old buildings for new uses. Chief amongst these is his refurbishment of Wylie's Baths, Coogee that won the Greenway Award in 1995, the highest RAI A honour for heritage conservation in NSW. Many other distinguished projects include the conversion of the Arthur Blacket woolstore into offices and the Magill Estate Winery (1994) incorporating extensive conservation works with new buildings.

At the University of Sydney Keith Cottier has left a significant architectural legacy with two projects: the Seymour Centre in 1975 which helped establish the University as a major venue for the performing arts, and the Schaeffer Fine Arts Library in 1998, where he seamlessly and delicately inserted a new function within the RC Mills Building.

In recognition of his contribution to the architectural profession he was awarded Royal Australian Institute of Architects' Gold Medal in 2001.

Perhaps unusual for a man of his professional achievement Keith has no overblown ego. He is a modest man of great warmth, good humour who has produced a great body distinguished buildings. Besides his own buildings he has also played a significant role in the development of a great many younger architects.

Chancellor, I have great pleasure in presenting to you, for admission to the degree of Doctor of Science in Architecture (honoris causa) Keith Eric Cottier.